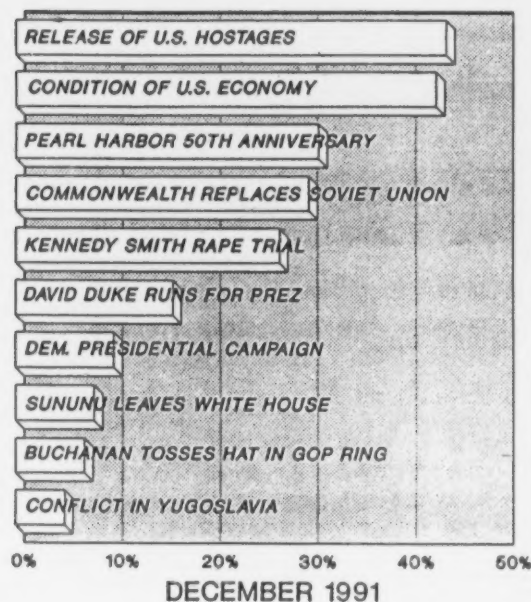
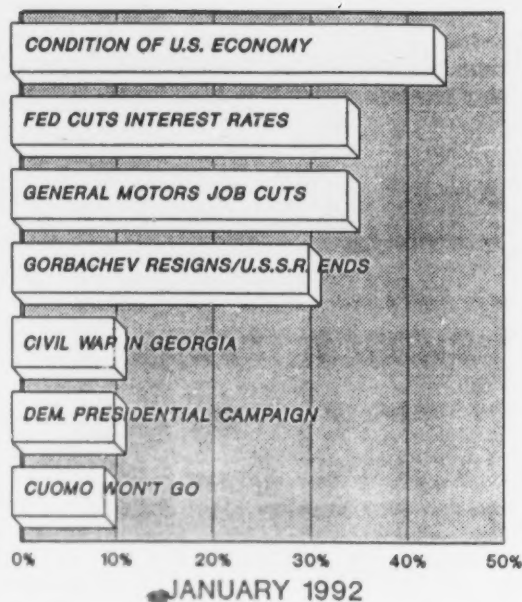


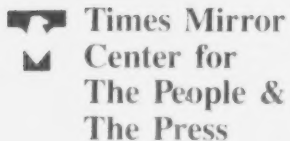
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Times Mirror News Interest Index

Public Interest and Awareness of the News



 **Times Mirror Center
for The People & The Press**



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Times Mirror News Interest Index January 1992

Public Interest and Awareness of the News

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PUBLIC TUNES IN TO ECONOMIC NEWS

In a period when Mikhail Gorbachev resigned as President of the USSR, when the Soviet Union fragmented and dissolved, and when the Commonwealth of Independent States took its place, stories about the U.S. economy are being followed much more closely by the American people.

According to the latest *Times Mirror News Interest Index*, forty-four percent of Americans have followed news reports about conditions of the U.S. economy very closely, while 31% concentrated their attention on Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation and the official end of the Soviet Union.

As significant as the Gorbachev/Soviet news was, it also received less attention from Americans than did the major job cuts announced by General Motors and the Federal Reserve's interest rates reduction. Thirty-five percent of Americans said they followed both of those stories very closely, compared to the 31% citing the political and social upheaval in the Soviet Union.

African Americans and Hispanics followed news reports about the economy even more closely than did white Americans. Fifty-one percent of respondents within minority groups followed these stories very closely compared to only 43% of whites. A similar pattern emerged on the General Motors stories. Forty-six percent of minorities followed them very closely compared to only 33% of whites.

Interest in U.S. economic news is the highest it has ever been measured during the fifteen months Times Mirror has asked questions on a monthly basis about interest in economic news. On an average, 34% of respondents have said they were following U.S. economic news *very closely*, versus the 44% in the current survey. Men continue to be more interested than women. Fifty percent of men said they were following U.S. economic news very closely versus 39% of women.

The other stories Americans tracked *very closely* are: the outbreak of Civil War in the former Soviet republic of Georgia (11% followed very closely), news about the Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination (11%), and Mario Cuomo's decision not to seek the Democratic presidential nomination (10%).

Although the presidential primary race is now in high gear, Americans' interest has not grown thus far. The 11% closely following the Democratic presidential candidates in January is virtually the same as the measurement Times Mirror recorded in our December survey (10%).

Mario Cuomo's internal debate over whether to run for the White House received heavy coverage, but Americans paid little more attention to Cuomo's exit (10%) than they did to Pat Buchanan's entry in December (7% followed very closely).

In comparison, 16% cited David Duke's presidential entry as a story they followed very closely in our December survey.

In other notable results from our *December and January News Interest Indexes*:

- *Older people were more likely than younger people to follow news stories about the 50th anniversary of Pearl Harbor. Only 23% of 18 - 34 year olds followed this story very closely compared to 52% of those 65 and over.

- *There was also a big generational difference in opinion about the Federal Reserve's lowering of interest rates. Only 12% of 18 - 29 year olds said the interest rate cut was mostly bad news, while 43% of those 65+ took a negative view.

- *Seventy-one percent of Americans said the William Kennedy Smith rape trial received too much coverage. This story wins the dubious honor of being most frequently cited for over coverage. The previous record was held by the news stories about Donald Trump's marital troubles in our March 1990 survey. At that time, 55% said the Trump story received too much coverage.

- *Large nationally influential newspapers like *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Los Angeles Times* got favorable ratings from 53% of the American public, while 13% expressed unfavorable views. CNN received an 82%-4% favorable/unfavorable rating, while C-Span received a 39%-8% rating.

- *A narrow plurality of Americans (49%-44%) thought news organizations get the facts straight, while 63% said news organizations tend to favor one side instead of dealing fairly with all sides.

- *By a 77%-15% margin, the public thought news organizations were fair to the Bush Administration.

- *Fifty-eight percent thought news organizations were often influenced by powerful people and organizations, while 35% said they were "pretty independent." Seven in ten thought business corporations, advertisers and the federal government influence the way news organizations report the news.

NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

(January 1992)

	<i>Mikhail Gorbachev's Resignation</i>	<i>Mario Cuomo's Decision not to Seek the Democratic Presidential Nomination</i>	<i>The Outbreak of Civil War in the Former Soviet Republic of Georgia</i>	<i>Reports About the Condition the U.S Economy</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>Total</i>	31	10	11	44	(1220)
<i>Sex</i>					
Male	36	12	12	50	(612)
Female	27	8	11	39	(608)
<i>Race</i>					
White	32	9	10	43	(1065)
*Hispanic	30	6	14	46	(54)
Black	27	20	19	51	(93)
<i>Age</i>					
Under 30	26	6	10	31	(275)
30-49	28	7	10	45	(511)
50+	39	16	14	52	(429)
<i>Education</i>					
College graduate	38	13	14	53	(353)
Other college	33	7	12	47	(317)
High school grad.	27	7	9	38	(395)
Less than h.s. grad.	29	15	12	40	(151)
<i>Region</i>					
East	35	19	12	48	(304)
Midwest	35	6	13	42	(352)
South	28	7	10	44	(385)
West	28	9	10	42	(179)
<i>Party ID</i>					
Republican	33	6	10	39	(367)
Democrat	34	13	16	51	(357)
Independent	29	10	9	43	(443)

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

*The designation, hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.
CONTINUED...

... CONTINUED

	<i>The Major Job Cuts Announced by General Motors</i>	<i>The Federal Reserve Bank's Interest Rate Reduction</i>	<i>News About the Democratic Candidates for the Presidential Nomination</i>
<i>Total</i>	35	35	11
<i>Sex</i>			
Male	36	38	9
Female	34	32	12
<i>Race</i>			
White	33	35	10
*Hispanic	54	46	6
Black	50	31	16
<i>Age</i>			
Under 30	25	18	6
30-49	32	37	8
50+	45	44	17
<i>Education</i>			
College graduate	31	41	8
Other college	37	34	9
High school grad.	31	30	12
Less than h.s. grad.	41	38	12
<i>Region</i>			
East	37	36	12
Midwest	40	33	8
South	32	33	13
West	28	37	9
<i>Party ID</i>			
Republican	30	37	5
Democrat	45	38	18
Independent	30	31	8

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

*The designation, hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted among a nationwide sample of 1006 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period December 18-22, 1991 and 1,220 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period January 3-6, 1992. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

TIMES MIRROR NEWS INTEREST INDEX
DECEMBER 1991
N=1006
December 18-22, 1991

MY FIRST QUESTION IS...

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?

44 Approve

52 Disapprove

4 Don't know/Refused
100

On another subject...

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Q.2 What do you think is the most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world in the past 4 weeks? (DO NOT READ)

4 OTHER (SPECIFY)

9 DON'T KNOW

* REFUSED

2 NONE

International Stories

The release of the last American hostages being held in Lebanon 13

The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the the Soviet Union 41

Other International 2

Domestic Stories

Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy 7

The William Kennedy Smith rape trial 10

Unemployment/GM layoffs 5

Other Domestic 6

THERE ARE NO QUESTIONS 3-6

Q.7 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (READ AND ROTATE LIST)

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. The conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics	5	21	34	40	0=100
b. The release of the last American hostages being held in Lebanon	44	40	11	5	0=100
c. The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the the Soviet Union	30	36	19	15	*=100
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	43	36	13	8	*=100
e. News about the Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination	10	28	32	30	*=100
f. Pat Buchanan's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination	7	16	28	49	*=100
g. The William Kennedy Smith rape trial	27	39	22	11	1=100
h. David Duke's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination	16	27	28	29	*=100
i. Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor	31	37	18	14	*=100
j. The resignation of White House Chief of Staff John Sununu	8	25	31	36	0=100

Q.8 Which one of the stories I just mentioned, have you followed most closely?
(DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)

	<u>Story Followed Most Closely</u>
a. The conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics	1
b. The release of the last American hostages being held in Lebanon	18
c. The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the the Soviet Union	20
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	12
e. News about the Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination	1
f. Pat Buchanan's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination	1
g. The William Kennedy Smith rape trial	28
h. David Duke's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination	4
i. Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor	8
j. The resignation of White House Chief of Staff John Sununu	1
None/Don't know	<u>6</u> 100

Q.9 Of all the stories mentioned, which of them, if any, received too much coverage? (DO NOT READ LIST, ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES, BE SURE TO PROMPT FOR "ANY OTHERS")

Received Too
Much Coverage

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| a. | The conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics | 1 |
| b. | The release of the last American hostages being held in Lebanon | 2 |
| c. | The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the the Soviet Union | 3 |
| d. | Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy | 1 |
| e. | News about the Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination | 2 |
| f. | Pat Buchanan's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination | 1 |
| g. | The William Kennedy Smith rape trial | 71 |
| h. | David Duke's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination | 7 |
| i. | Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor | 4 |
| j. | The resignation of White House Chief of Staff John Sununu | 1 |
| | None/Don't know | 16 |

IF RESPONDENT SAID '99' CAN'T SAY IN Q.8, SKIP TO Q.11

Q.10 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.8); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK</u>
b. The release of the last American hostages	34	53	12	1	*=100
c. The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule	20	60	18	2	0=100
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	10	37	34	19	0=100
g. The William Kennedy Smith rape trial	16	48	22	12	2=100
i. Commemoration of 50th anniv. of attack on Pearl Harbor	36	49	12	3	0=100

ASK ALL:

Q.11 In your opinion, which TV network has been doing the best job of covering the news lately - ABC, CBS, NBC or CNN?

18	ABC
15	CBS
15	NBC
42	CNN
<u>10</u> 100	Don't know/Refused

TIMES MIRROR NEWS INTEREST INDEX
JANUARY 1992
JANUARY 3-6, 1992
N=1,220

SEX: 1[]Male 2[]Female

INTERVIEWER'S NAME: _____

TIME STARTED: _____

INTERVIEWER'S I.D.: _____

TIME FINISHED: _____

PAGE NUMBER: _____

LENGTH: _____

REPLICATE NUMBER: _____

REGION: 1 East
2 Midwest
3 South
4 West

STRATUM: 1 Stratum One
2 Stratum Two
3 Remainder

DATE: _____

INTRODUCTION: Hello, We are conducting a telephone opinion survey for leading newspapers and tv stations around the country. I'd like to ask a few questions of the youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home (IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the oldest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home?)

MY FIRST QUESTION IS...

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?

		NEWS INTEREST INDEX						
		Nov <u>1991</u>	Oct <u>1991</u>	July <u>1991</u>	May <u>1991</u>	March <u>1991</u>	Jan 25 <u>1991</u>	Jan 3 <u>1991</u>
46	Approve	55	61	67	77	84	79	59
43	Disapprove	33	28	23	16	10	14	24
<u>11</u> 100	Don't know	<u>12</u> 100	<u>10</u> 100	<u>10</u> 100	<u>7</u> 100	<u>6</u> 100	<u>7</u> 100	<u>17</u> 100

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Q.2 What do you think is the most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world in the past 4 weeks? (DO NOT READ)

- 7 OTHER (SPECIFY)
- 1 DON'T KNOW
- * REFUSED
- 24 NONE

International Stories

54

Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as the Soviet Union came to an official end

49

The outbreak of civil war in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia

2

Middle East Peace talks

1

Bush's Asia trade visit

2

Domestic Stories

14

Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy

7

News about the Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination

0

Mario Cuomo's decision not to seek the Democratic presidential nomination

0

The Federal Reserve Bank's interest rate reduction

1

Hostages return home

5

William Kennedy Smith trial

1

Q.3 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (READ AND ROTATE LIST)

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as the Soviet Union came to an official end	31	42	20	7	*=100
b. Mario Cuomo's decision not to seek the Democratic presidential nomination	10	17	30	42	1=100
c. The outbreak of civil war in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia	11	35	33	20	1=100
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	44	40	11	5	*=100
e. The major job cuts announced by General Motors	35	38	18	9	*=100
f. The Federal Reserve Bank's interest rate reduction	35	31	19	14	1=100
g. News about the Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination	11	25	36	27	1=100

Q.3a Which one of the stories I just mentioned, have you followed most closely? (DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)

	Story Followed <u>Most Closely</u>
a. Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as the Soviet Union came to an official end	30
b. Mario Cuomo's decision not to seek the Democratic presidential nomination	2
c. The outbreak of civil war in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia	3
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	20
e. The major job cuts announced by General Motors	18
f. The Federal Reserve Bank's interest rate reduction	15
g. News about the Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination	3
Don't know/No answer	
None	<u>9</u> 100

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT..

Q.21 I'd like your opinion of some people and organizations. As I read from a list, please tell me which category best describes your overall opinion of who or what I name. First, would you describe your opinion of (ITEM) as very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

	Very Favor- able	(VOL) Mostly Favor- able	(VOL) Mostly Unfavor- able	Very Unfavor- able	Never Heard Of	Can't Rate
1. Network TV news	27	55	11	2	0	5=100
November	24	51	16	5	0	4=100
March, 1991	40	51	5	2	0	2=100
May, 1990	22	60	12	3	*	3=100
August, 1989	28	54	11	3		4=100
January, 1989	21	61	12	3		3=100
*August, 1988	29	52	9	5		5=100
May, 1988	20	58	14	4		4=100
January 27, 1988	12	69	13	3		3=100
Jan. 7-18, 1988	18	60	14	4		4=100
October, 1987	19	62	10	3		6=100
May, 1987	21	63	11	3		2=100
January, 1987	19	55	16	6		4=100
July, 1986	30	53	10	4		3=100
August, 1985	30	51	8	2		7=100
June, 1985	25	59	8	2		6=100
m. The daily newspaper you are most familiar with	27	51	13	5	0	4=100
November, 1991	24	56	11	5	0	4=100
March, 1991	30	55	7	3	*	5=100
May, 1990	22	56	12	5	*	5=100
August, 1989	25	52	12	5		6=100
January, 1989	22	56	13	4		5=100
*August, 1988	30	48	10	5		7=100
May, 1988	19	59	13	4		5=100
January 27, 1988	19	62	11	3		5=100
Jan. 7-18, 1988	21	59	12	4		4=100
October, 1987	21	58	9	4		8=100
May, 1987	22	59	12	3		4=100
January, 1987	19	57	13	6		5=100
July, 1986	28	51	11	6		4=100
August, 1985	25	52	10	5		8=100
June, 1985	25	56	8	3		8=100

Q.21 I'd like your opinion of some people and organizations. As I read from a list, please tell me which category best describes your overall opinion of who or what I name. First, would you describe your opinion of (ITEM) as very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

	<u>Very</u> <u>Favor-</u> <u>able</u>	<u>Mostly</u> <u>Favor-</u> <u>able</u>	<u>Mostly</u> <u>Unfavor-</u> <u>able</u>	(VOL) <u>Very</u> <u>Unfavor-</u> <u>able</u>	(VOL) <u>Never</u> <u>Heard</u> <u>Of</u>	<u>Can't</u> <u>Rate</u>
n. Large nationally influential papers such as the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times	16	37	9	4	0	34=100
June, 1985	12	36	8	3	1	40=100
o. CNN	44	38	3	1	3	11=100
September, 1987	23	30	3	2	6	36=100
p. C-Span	12	27	6	2	24	29=100
June, 1985	4	10	2	2	55	27=100

A FEW MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PRESS.....

Q.22 In general, do you think news organizations get the facts straight or do you think that their stories and reports are often inaccurate?

	<u>Aug.</u> <u>1989</u>	<u>Aug.</u> <u>1988</u>	<u>May</u> <u>1988</u>	<u>Jan.</u> <u>1988</u>	<u>June</u> <u>1985</u>
49 Get facts straight	54	40	43	44	55
44 Inaccurate	44	50	43	48	34
$\frac{7}{100}$ Can't say	$\frac{2}{100}$	$\frac{10}{100}$	$\frac{9}{100}$	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{11}{100}$

Q.23 In presenting the news dealing with political and social issues, do you think that news organizations deal fairly with all sides or do they tend to favor one side?

		<u>Aug. 1989</u>	<u>Aug. 1988</u>	<u>May 1988</u>	<u>Jan. 1988</u>	<u>Dec. 1986</u>	<u>July 1986</u>	<u>June 1985</u>
31	Deal fairly with all sides	28	36	34	30	39	37	34
63	Tend to favor one side	68	57	56	59	54	57	53
$\frac{6}{100}$	Can't say	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{10}{100}$	$\frac{11}{100}$	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{6}{100}$	$\frac{13}{100}$

Q.24 Are the news organizations you are most familiar with fair or unfair to the Bush Administration?

		<u>Aug. 1989</u>	<u>Jan.¹ 1988</u>	<u>Dec. 1986</u>	<u>June 1985</u>
77	Fair	82	66	67	78
15	Unfair	12	21	25	12
$\frac{8}{100}$	Don't know	$\frac{6}{100}$	$\frac{13}{100}$	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{10}{100}$

Q.25 In general, do you think news organizations are pretty independent, or are they often influenced by powerful people and organizations?

		<u>Aug. 1989</u>	<u>Jan. 1988</u>	<u>July 1986</u>	<u>June 1985</u>
35	Pretty independent	33	40	37	37
58	Often influenced by the powerful	62	49	53	53
$\frac{7}{100}$	Can't say	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{11}{100}$	$\frac{10}{100}$	$\frac{10}{100}$

¹ June, 1985 through January, 1988 refer to the Reagan administration.

Q.25b As I read from a list tell me whether or not you feel this group often influences news organizations in the way they report the news? (ROTATE) Do you feel that (GROUP) often influence news organizations in the way they report the news?

	Yes, <u>Influences</u>	No, <u>Does Not</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Business Corporations	71	23	6=100
January, 1988	71	18	11=100
June, 1985	70	20	10=100
b. Conservatives	48	40	12=100
January, 1988	38	42	20=100
June, 1985	45	39	16=100
c. The Federal Government	74	21	5=100
January, 1988	67	22	11=100
June, 1985	73	19	8=100
d. Catholics	28	60	12=100
January, 1988	29	51	20=100
June, 1985	35	49	16=100
e. Jews	25	61	14=100
January, 1988	29	50	21=100
June, 1985	33	49	18=100
f. Liberals	52	37	11=100
January, 1988	42	37	21=100
June, 1985	48	37	15=100
g. Advertisers	71	24	5=100
January, 1988	69	21	10=100
June, 1985	65	26	9=100

ASK EVERYONE:

Q.28 Thinking about the Presidential primaries, generally do you think they are a good way of determining who the best qualified nominees are, or not?

	<u>Jan. 1988</u>
51 Yes, a good way	61
41 No, not a good way	25
<u>8</u> Don't know	<u>16</u>
100	100

Q.29 How much influence do you feel news organizations have on which candidates become Presidential nominees: too much influence, too little influence, or about the right amount?

		Jan. <u>1988</u>	Oct. <u>1987</u>
53	Too much influence	51	59
4	Too little influence	4	5
40	About the right amount	37	31
<u>3</u> 100	Don't know	<u>8</u> 100	<u>5</u> 100

A year ago there was a vote in Congress about whether to use military force against Iraq if it did not voluntarily leave Kuwait by the UN deadline for withdrawal...

Q.36 If you learned that your Congressman had voted in favor of using force against Iraq - would it make you more likely or less likely to vote for his or her re-election this fall, or wouldn't it affect you?

40	More likely
13	Less likely
43	No effect
<u>4</u> 100	No opinion

Q.37 If you learned that your Congressman had voted no to using force against Iraq - would it make you more likely or less likely to vote for his or her re-election, this fall or wouldn't it affect you?

14	More likely
38	Less likely
44	No effect
<u>4</u> 100	No opinion

Q.901 How often would you say you vote -- always, nearly always, part of the time, or seldom?

40 Always

35 Nearly always

11 Part of the time

10 Seldom

0 Other (VOLUNTEERED)

4 Never vote (VOLUNTEERED)

$\frac{*}{100}$ Don't know/No answer

TIMES MIRROR DATABASE

PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES

(1986 - 1991)

PERCENT FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY

- 80 Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (July 86)
- 73 Destruction caused by the San Francisco earthquake (Nov 89)
- 69 Little girl in Texas who was rescued after falling into a well (Oct 87)
- 67 War's end and the homecoming of U.S. forces from the Gulf (March 91)
- 66 Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia (Aug 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Oct 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Sept 90)
- 62 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Nov 90)
- 62 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Oct 90)
- 60 Invasion of Panama (Jan 90)
- 60 Destruction caused by Hurricane Hugo (Oct 89)
- 59 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Jan 91)
- 58 U.S. air strikes against Libya (July 86)
- 57 The plight of the American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq (Sept 90)
- 57 Recent increase in the price of gasoline (Aug 90)
- 56 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Sept 90)
- 53 Crash of a United Airlines DC-10 in Sioux City, Iowa (Aug 89)
- 52 Alaska Oil Spill (May 89)
- 51 The release of American hostages and other westerners from Iraq and Kuwait (Jan 91)
- 51 Supreme Court decision of flag burning (July 89)
- 50 Opening of the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany (Nov 89)
- 50 Flight of the space shuttle (Oct 88)
- 49 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Nov 90)
- 49 Murder of Marine Lt. Col. Higgins in Lebanon, and negotiations to free the other hostages in the Mideast (Aug 89)
- 49 Drought and its effects on American farmers (Aug 88)
- 48 TWA hostage crisis that took place last summer in Beirut, Lebanon (July 86)
- 47 Breakup of the Soviet Union following the failed coup to depose of Mikhail Gorbachev (Oct 91)
- 47 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Oct 90)
- 47 Political upheaval in China (July 89)
- 47 Supreme Court decision on abortion (July 89)
- 46 Videotaped beating by Los Angeles police of a suspect they apprehended in an auto chase (March 91)
- 46 Nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union (July 86)
- 46 Freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast (May 90)
- 44 REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY (JAN 1992)
- 44 THE RELEASE OF THE LAST AMERICAN HOSTAGES BEING HELD IN LEBANON (DEC 91)
- 43 REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE US ECONOMY (DEC 91)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 43 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Oct 88)
- 42 Hot weather this summer and the greenhouse effect (Aug 88)
- 42 Downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a U.S. Navy ship (Aug 88)
- 41 News regarding harassment charges raised against supreme court
nominee Clarence Thomas (Oct 91)
- 40 Bush administration's plan to deal with this country's drug problem (Sept 89)
- 40 The stock market crash (Oct 87)

- 39 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Nov 90)
- 39 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Aug 88)
- 38 President Bush's heart problem (May 91)
- 38 News about the candidates and elections in your state (Nov 90)
- 38 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the U.S. for a Summit
meeting (June 90)
- 38 Drug use and efforts to combat it (Jan 90)
- 38 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Sept 87)
- 37 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Oct 87)
- 37 Stories about Dan Quayle, the Republican Vice-Presidential candidate (Aug 88)
- 37 Sentencing of Oliver North (July 89)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Oct 91)
- 36 The situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq and allied attempts to help them (May 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (March 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 91)
- 36 The murder of five people by a serial killer around the University of Florida campus in
Gainesville (Sept 90)
- 35 **FEDERAL RESERVE BANK'S INTEREST RATE REDUCTION (JAN 1992)**
- 35 **THE MAJOR JOB CUTS ANNOUNCED BY GENERAL MOTORS (JAN 1992)**
- 35 The Standoff in Baghdad between the Iraqis and UN weapons inspectors (Oct 91)
- 35 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (July 1991)
- 35 Attempts to change the abortion laws (Dec 89)
- 35 Hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in the Mediterranean (July 86)
- 35 Explosion and fire on the U.S. Battleship Iowa (May 89)
- 34 Civil war in Iraq between Shiite Iraqis and forces loyal to Saddam Hussein (March 91)
- 34 Congressional and administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement (Nov 90)
- 34 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the
budget deficit (Oct 90)
- 34 Reports about flooding in Texas and other southwestern states (June 90)
- 34 The war between the Colombian government and the major drug traffickers (Sept 89)
- 33 The nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court of Clarence Thomas to replace retiring Justice
Thurgood Marshall (July 1991)
- 33 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (May 91)
- 33 Crash of the Colombian airliner near Kennedy airport in New York (Feb 90)
- 33 Congressional hearings about the Iran-Contra affair (Sept 87)
- 33 Guilty verdict in the trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Oct 89)
- 32 Criticisms of George Bush for being inconsistent in what he said about taxes and what he
said about Persian Gulf policy (Nov 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 31 MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S RESIGNATION AS THE SOVIET UNION CAME TO AN OFFICIAL
END (JAN 1992)
- 31 COMMEMORATION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE JAPANESE ATTACK ON PEARL
HARBOR (DEC 91)
- 31 President Bush's announcement of major nuclear arms reductions (Oct 91)
- 31 The closing of military bases around the country (July 1991)
- 31 Celebration of Earth Day (May 90)
- 31 The World Series (Oct 88)
- 31 Flight of East German refugees to West Germany (Oct 89)
- 31 Oliver North trial (May 89)
- 30 THE END OF MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S RULE, AS A NEW COMMONWEALTH WAS FORMED
TO REPLACE THE SOVIET UNION (DEC 91)
- 30 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Aug 90)
- 30 Freeing of jailed black South African leader Nelson Mandela (March 90)
- 30 Banishment of Pete Rose from baseball for life (Sept 89)
- 30 The Democratic convention (Aug 88)
- 30 President Bush's call for higher taxes to help reduce the federal deficit (July 90)

- 29 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Sept 90)
- 29 Reports about the fires in Southern California (July 90)
- 29 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and
Moscow's response (April 90)
- 29 Suicide in Boston of Charles Stuart who murdered his pregnant wife and blamed it on a
black man (Feb 90)
- 29 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Jan 90)
- 29 Political changes in East Germany and the flight of refugees to West Germany (Nov 89)
- 29 Attack and sexual assault on a female jogger in Central Park, New York, by a
group of youths (May 89)
- 29 Failed coup attempt against Panamanian strongman Noriega (Oct 89)
- 28 The death of 87 people in a fire at a social club in the Bronx, New York (April 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in the Soviet Union (March 90)
- 28 Arrest of Washington's Mayor Barry on drug use charges (Feb 90)
- 28 The revolution in Romania (Jan 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Dec 89)
- 28 Problems at nuclear reactor plants (Oct 88)
- 28 The end of Gary Hart's candidacy and the Donna Rice allegations (Sept 87)
- 27 THE WILLIAM KENNEDY SMITH RAPE TRIAL (DEC 91)
- 27 Deployment of U.S. marines to Liberia to protect the lives of Americans caught in the
civil war (Aug 90)
- 27 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's
response (May 90)
- 27 Acquittal of the owners of the McMartin Day Care Center in California who were charged
with sexually abusing children (Feb 90)
- 27 The NFL playoffs (Jan 90)
- 27 The Republican convention (Aug 88)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 26 Charges that the White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes and government cars for personal trips (July 1991)
- 26 Concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President (May 91)
- 26 Bush/Gorbachev summit meeting in Helsinki (Sept 90)
- 26 The death of Hank Gathers, a college basketball player, during a game (April 90)
- 26 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Feb 90)
- 26 Passage in Congress of a bill to bail out ailing savings and loan institutions (Aug 89)
- 25 Supreme court decision allowing laws that bar federally funded agencies from discussing abortion (July 1991)
- 25 Supreme Court's hearing of arguments in a Missouri abortion case (May 89)
- 24 Charges that Reagan campaign officials made a deal with Iran to hold up release of the hostages until after the 1980 Presidential campaign (July 1991)
- 24 Charges that White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes for personal trips (May 91)
- 24 Supreme Court decision that found laws against flag burning unconstitutional and the attempt in Congress to amend the Constitution (July 90)
- 24 Nelson Mandela's visit to the U.S. (July 90)
- 24 Deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope (May 90)
- 24 Difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms (May 90)
- 24 The NCAA Basketball playoffs (April 90)
- 24 Supreme Court decision regarding a person's right to die (July 90)
- 23 Cyclone that devastated Bangladesh (May 91)
- 23 Attempt in Idaho to pass a bill that would severely restrict abortions (April 90)
- 23 Greyhound bus drivers' strike (April 90)
- 23 Discussion of the reunification of Germany (March 90)
- 23 The World Series (Nov 89)
- 22 Protests and demonstrations at abortion clinics in Wichita, Kansas (Oct 91)
- 22 Congressional hearings about U.S. Persian Gulf policy (Jan 91)
- 22 Reunification of Germany (Oct 90)
- 22 Washington Mayor Barry's trial (July 90)
- 22 The 54 year old Oregon woman suffering from Alzheimers who ended her life by using a suicide machine (July 90)
- 22 President Bush's visit to Colombia to attend a drug summit (March 90)
- 22 The Super Bowl (Feb 90)
- 22 Letter bombings of federal judges (Jan 90)
- 22 Discoveries made by the spacecraft Voyager 2 (Sept 89)
- 22 Trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Sept 89)
- 22 April hijacking of a Kuwaiti airplane by Shiite Moslems (May 88)
- 22 Cease fire in the war between Iran and Iraq (Aug 88)
- 22 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (May 88)
- 22 Charges that Pete Rose has bet on baseball games (July 89)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 21 Alleged rape of a young woman at the Kennedy family's Palm Beach estate (May 91)
- 21 Controversy surrounding the way Roseanne Barr sang the National Anthem at a San Diego Padres baseball game (Aug 90)
- 21 Tensions between Moscow and the Baltic Republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania who wish to secede from the Soviet Union (June 90)
- 21 Discussions about German reunification (April 90)
- 21 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe (March 90)
- 21 Scandal involving HUD (Aug 89)
- 20 Mikhail Gorbachev's political problems in the Soviet Union (March 91)
- 20 Resignation of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the election of her successor (Jan 91)
- 20 The murder on a New York subway platform of a Utah man attempting to protect his family from attack by teenage muggers (Sept 90)
- 20 Earthquake in Iran (July 90)
- 20 Gorbachev/Bush summit (Dec 89)
- 20 Attempts by the U.S. government to depose General Noriega in Panama (May 88)
- 20 Post-season baseball playoffs (Oct 89)

- 19 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Aug 90)
- 19 Elections in Nicaragua (March 90)
- 19 Coup attempt against the Filipino government (Dec 89)
- 19 Attempts in Congress to repeal the new catastrophic health insurance plan (Oct 89)
- 19 Incidents of racial violence in New York City and Virginia Beach (Sept 89)
- 19 Discussions of a U.S. Soviet arms agreement (Sept 87)
- 18 News about the candidates and election campaigns in your state (Oct 90)
- 18 Special meetings between the Bush Administration and Congressional Leaders to find ways to reduce the federal deficit (June 90)
- 18 Continuing news about the Savings and Loan scandal (June 90)
- 18 Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates (May 90)
- 18 Senator Moynihan's proposal to cut social security taxes (Feb 90)
- 18 The stock market crash (May 88)
- 18 Conflict in the Middle East between Palestinians and the Israelis in the occupied territories (May 88)
- 17 President Bush's decision to lift the trade embargo on South Africa (July 1991)
- 17 Racial tension in New York City resulting from the Bensonhurst trial verdict and the black boycott of Korean grocers (June 90)
- 17 Discussions between the American and Japanese governments about trade issues (April 90)
- 17 A custody case involving a mother who went to jail and a little child taken to New Zealand by her grandparents (March 90)
- 17 Nomination of Robert Bork to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court (Sept 87)
- 16 **DAVID DUKE'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WILL RUN FOR THE REPUBLICAN
PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION (DEC 91)**
- 16 Nomination of David Souter to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace Justice William Brennan (Aug 90)
- 16 Washington DC Mayor Marion Barry's trial ending in a mistrial (Aug 90)
- 16 Financial troubles of Donald Trump (July 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 16 Dispute between the President and Congress over allowing Chinese students to remain in America (Feb 90)
- 15 President Bush's decision to postpone loan guarantees to Israel (Oct 91)
- 15 Resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze (Jan 91)
- 15 Senate confirmation of Supreme Court Justice David Souter (Oct 90)
- 15 Controversy over the exclusion of blacks from membership in many country clubs at which national golf championship matches are played (Aug 90)
- 15 Education Summit held by Bush and the nation's Governors (Oct 89)
- 15 Ethics committee's investigation of Speaker of the House Jim Wright (May 89)
- 15 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 87)
- 15 Conflict of interest allegations about Attorney General Ed Meese (May 88)
- 15 Scandal involving HUD (July 89)
- 14 President Bush's educational reform plan (May 91)
- 14 Political unrest and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union (May 91)
- 14 Renewed fighting between government and the rebels in El Salvador (Dec 89)
- 14 House approval of a cut in the capital gains tax (Oct 89)
- 14 Spy scandal involving a U.S. Diplomat in Vienna (Aug 89)
- 14 Coverage of Democratic and Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Sept 87)
- 14 Pending divorce between Mike Tyson and Robin Givens (Oct 88)
- 13 The BCCI international banking scandal (Oct 91)
- 13 U.S. Department of Education prohibition of racially based college scholarships (Jan 91)
- 13 Worsening economic conditions in the Soviet Union (Sept 90)
- 13 Civil unrest and ethnic violence in Soviet Azerbaijan (Feb 90)
- 13 Resumption of fighting in Nicaragua between the Contras and government forces (Nov 89)
- 13 Elections in Virginia, New Jersey, New York City and other localities (Nov 89)
- 13 News about the Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Oct 88)
- 12 Nomination of Robert Gates to head the CIA (Oct 91)
- 12 News about the democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 91)
- 12 Russian President Boris Yeltsin's election victory and visit to the U.S. (July 1991)
- 12 The findings of the committee that investigated five senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (March 91)
- 12 Major League Baseball's decision to force George Steinbrenner to give up active control of the New York Yankees (Aug 90)
- 12 Pledge of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to end the armed struggle in South Africa (Aug 90)
- 12 Marital breakup of Donald and Ivana Trump (March 90)
- 12 Solidarity's role in governing Poland (July 89)
- 11 **THE OUTBREAK OF CIVIL WAR IN THE FORMER SOVIET REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA (JAN 1992)**
- 11 **NEWS ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION (JAN 1992)**
- 11 Debate in Washington about a new civil rights bill (July 1991)
- 11 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (July 1991)
- 11 The incident in Gaza in which a deranged Israeli killed seven Palestinians and the West bank riots that followed (June 90)
- 11 Legalization of banned black opposition groups in South Africa and the promise to free Nelson Mandela (Feb 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

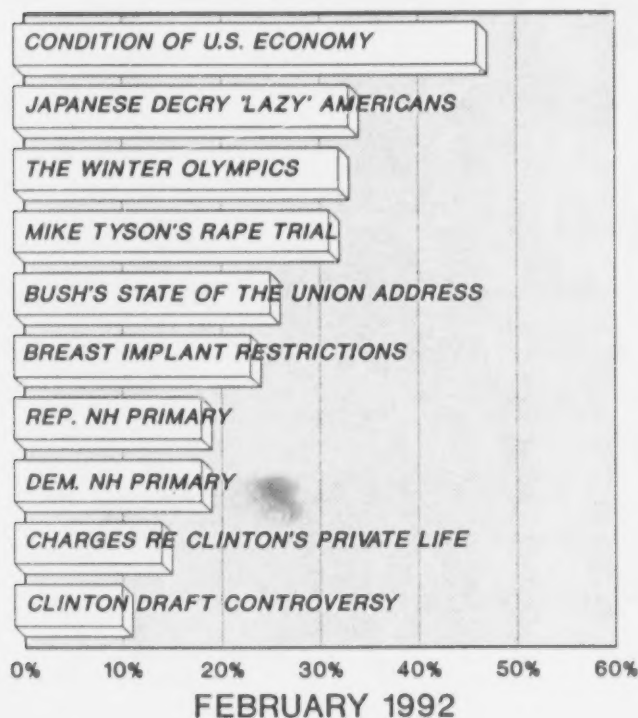
- 10 MARIO CUOMO'S DECISION NOT TO SEEK THE DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL
NOMINATION (JAN 1992)
- 10 NEWS ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION
(DEC 91)
- 10 Japanese purchase of Rockefeller center in New York City (Dec 89)
- 10 The spending and tax proposals made by Congressman Dan Rostenkowski to help reduce
the budget deficit (April 90)
- 10 Academy Awards (April 90)

- 9 Purchase of entertainment giant, MCA by the Japanese consumer electronics company,
Matsushita (Jan 91)
- 9 The investigation of five U.S. Senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for
campaign contributions (Jan 91)
- 9 Aids conference in San Francisco (July 90)
- 9 May day protests in Moscow (May 90)
- 9 Bankruptcy of Drexel Burnham Lambert Inc. (March 90)
- 9 Trial of Hotel owner Leona Helmsley for tax evasion (Sept 89)
- 9 Stories about the 20th anniversary of the Woodstock Music Festival (Aug 89)
- 8 THE RESIGNATION OF WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF JOHN SUNUNU (DEC 91)
- 8 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Oct 91)
- 8 The release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan (May 91)
- 8 The murder in New York city of Jewish militant rabbi Meir Kahane (Nov 90)
- 7 First reports from the 1990 U.S. census (Sept 90)
- 7 PAT BUCHANAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WILL RUN FOR THE REPUBLICAN
PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION (DEC 91)
- 6 William Bennett's change of mind about heading the Republican National Committee (Jan 91)
- 6 Continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and in other republics of the Soviet Union (Nov 90)
- 6 United Nations Children's Summit held in New York (Oct 90)
- 6 Elections in Romania (June 90)
- 6 The visit to the United States of Vaclav Havel, the new president of
Czechoslovakia (March 90)
- 6 Trip of high ranking officials to China (Jan 90)
- 6 Scandal involving the Japanese Prime Minister and other high ranking officials (May 89)
- 6 The scandal involving Congressman Barney Frank and a male prostitute (Oct 89)
- 5 THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE YUGOSLAVIAN REPUBLICS (DEC 91)
- 4 Dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto by Pakistan's President (Aug 90)
- 4 Civil war in Cambodia (May 90)
- 2 Tom Cruise's separation from his wife (April 90)

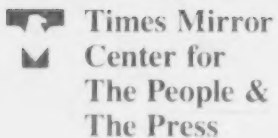
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Times Mirror News Interest Index

Public Interest and Awareness of the News



 **Times Mirror Center
for The People & The Press**



N E W S Release

1875 Eye Street, N.W., Suite 1110
Washington, D.C. 20006
202 293-3126

FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 1992, A.M.

**Times Mirror News Interest Index
February 1992**

**Public Interest and
Awareness of the News**

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WASHINGTON FOLLOWS THE PRIMARIES; AMERICA FOLLOWS TYSON, OLYMPICS, & ECONOMY

While the eyes of Washington have been focused on the presidential primaries, most Americans have paid much more attention to the Mike Tyson rape trial, the Winter Olympics, and reports about the U.S. economy.

According to the latest *Times Mirror News Interest Index*, 24% of those polled cited the Mike Tyson rape trial as the story they followed **most closely**. Twenty-one percent said they followed the Winter Olympics "most closely", and 14% said reports about the condition of the U.S. economy. The Democratic and Republican primaries in New Hampshire received only 6% and 4% respectively in the "most closely" watched category.

When the public is measured as to which news events they followed **very closely**, stories about the state of the economy ranked first with 47%, and 34% very closely followed statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy. Thirty-three percent said the Winter Olympics, and 32% said the Tyson trial were news events that they followed "very closely."

Among all Americans, 41% have received their information about the campaign from television only and 38% from newspapers **and** television. People who received their information from print sources alone (9%) or a combination of print and tv, were somewhat better informed than those who relied solely on the electronic media. When asked to identify a candidate with the *America First* theme, only 7% of those who followed the campaign on tv were able to identify Pat Buchanan as the message sender. Seventeen percent of those who were reading newspapers and watching tv both, were able to identify Buchanan, and among those who used print alone to follow news about the campaign, 23% linked America First with the Buchanan candidacy. But no matter what the news source and what the question, the information level at this stage of the campaign is still quite low.

Although reports about the U.S. economy was the most **widely** followed story, the Tyson trial was the most **intensely** followed. This is similar to data from the *December News Interest Index* when the release of U.S. hostages was the most **widely** followed story, but the William Kennedy Smith trial was the most **intensely** followed.

One reason for the dominance of the Tyson story is the extraordinary attention black Americans paid to the story. Fifty-one percent of black Americans cited Tyson as the story they followed most closely, compared to only 20% of white Americans. People with lower levels of education followed the Tyson story more closely than those with more education.

Public Says Japan Replaces Soviet Union as Greatest Threat to U.S.

The *News Interest Index* also revealed that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rising tide of negative stories about Japan have produced a dramatic shift in how Americans view the world. Thirty-one percent of the respondents volunteered that Japan represented the greatest danger to the U.S., while 13% said Russia. In March of 1990, 32% said the Soviet Union was the greatest danger and only 8% said Japan.

Perhaps because they feel more economically threatened, younger Americans (18-29 years old) were significantly more likely to single out Japan as a danger. People on the East Coast were also more likely to say Japan, compared to people on the West Coast.

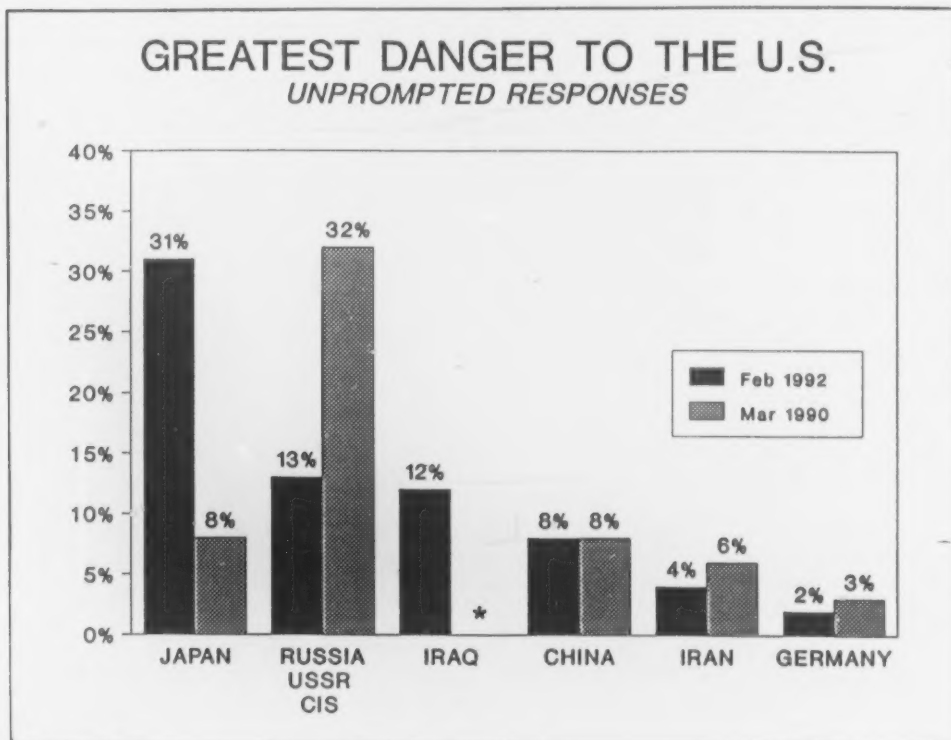


Figure 1

Campaign Themes Go Unnoticed

One measure of how little attention Americans were paying to the February presidential primaries is found in the low recognition of the candidates' campaign themes. No more than 13% of respondents could correctly match a given campaign theme with the right candidate. Pat Buchanan's *America's interests should come ahead of the world's interests* was correctly identified by 13%.

Seventeen percent associated George Bush with the theme *the middle class should be given a tax cut*, while 9% associated the theme with Bill Clinton. Only 16% of Paul Tsongas' own supporters correctly associated the former Senator with the theme of *Business and Government should form a partnership to improve American economic competitiveness*.

Press Getting Mixed Grades for Coverage

The public is giving the press decidedly mixed grades for its coverage. Forty-eight percent of respondents said the press has done an *only fair* or *poor* job covering the U.S. economy, 38% said the same for coverage both of the Republican primary in New Hampshire and the controversies surrounding Bill Clinton.

In comparison, only 17% said press coverage of the Winter Olympics was "only fair" or "poor".

On press coverage of the campaign specifically, 56% said it was *excellent* or *good*, while 39% said it was *only fair* or *poor*. Although there was substantial criticism of the coverage of Governor Clinton's campaign difficulties, a 56% to 40% margin in the Times Mirror sample said that they believed it was important to learn about the controversies that had come to light. When asked what was more responsible for the problems Governor Clinton has had in his campaign, 48% cited the press coverage and 40% attributed them to Clinton's own actions and views. Not surprisingly, 56% of Clinton supporters said the press has been irresponsible in its coverage of the Arkansas Governor.

TV Dominant Source of Campaign News

Television remains the dominant source for presidential campaign news. People were asked where they were getting most of their news about the presidential election campaign and a total of two answers were accepted. Eighty percent cited television, 49% said newspapers, 18% said radio, and 4% said magazines.

Of those who cited television as the main source, 40% said their information came primarily from network news, 37% said local news, and 29% said CNN.

Black Americans are much less likely than average to get their political news from newspapers, and much more likely to get political news from local TV or CNN.

In other results:

- *By a 2-1 margin, people believe that the reporters who broke the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas story should be allowed to keep their sources confidential;

- *CNN continued to be cited as the TV network doing the best job in covering the news, although its margin has slipped from earlier surveys;

- *The reduced press coverage of this year's campaign meets with public approval; 62% say news organizations are giving the right amount of coverage, while only 15% said it was too little;

- *Even though coverage may be reduced, 58% said that news organizations have too much influence on which candidates win the nominations;

- *Women were five times more likely than men to follow closely the news stories about breast implants;

- *Only 1 American in 6 said they have watched any of the Democratic debates.

PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	Reports About the Condition of the U.S. Economy	U.S. Workers Lazy	Winter Olympics	Tyson Rape Trial	State of Union Address	N
Total	47	34	33	32	26	(1227)
Sex						
Male	52	39	30	30	26	(612)
Female	42	30	36	34	26	(615)
Race						
White	46	34	34	28	26	(1065)
*Hispanic	46	31	26	49	37	(69)
Black	50	35	22	60	19	(105)
Age						
Under 30	38	29	32	37	19	(294)
30-49	45	33	37	31	28	(497)
50 +	53	39	30	30	28	(427)
Education						
College graduate	52	32	39	29	35	(364)
Other college	50	35	36	26	27	(347)
High school grad.	41	36	31	37	25	(384)
Less than h.s. grad.	44	32	24	36	15	(130)
Region						
East	47	36	36	34	26	(309)
Midwest	39	37	36	33	24	(340)
South	48	31	28	35	26	(437)
West	52	33	32	24	27	(141)
Party ID						
Republican	43	33	36	26	32	(405)
Democrat	49	35	29	39	23	(393)
Independent	49	33	34	31	22	(400)

Question: *Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.*

*The designation, hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization
CONTINUED...

... CONTINUED

	Breast Implant Controversy	Repub. Primary In New Hampshire	Democratic Primary In New Hampshire	Clinton Affair	Clinton Draft	N
Total	24	19	19	15	11	(1227)
Sex						
Male	14	20	19	15	13	(612)
Female	33	19	20	16	9	(615)
Race						
White	23	19	18	15	11	(1065)
*Hispanic	27	26	27	25	10	(69)
Black	32	18	24	15	11	(105)
Age						
Under 30	22	15	13	12	5	(294)
30-49	24	16	17	12	10	(497)
50+	26	26	26	20	16	(427)
Education						
College graduate	24	24	27	14	10	(364)
Other college	24	22	19	11	12	(347)
High school grad.	27	16	17	16	9	(384)
Less than h.s. grad.	18	16	15	21	14	(130)
Region						
East	29	22	25	14	13	(309)
Midwest	20	18	18	14	12	(340)
South	24	18	16	18	11	(437)
West	22	21	18	13	7	(141)
Party ID						
Republican	23	20	13	13	8	(405)
Democrat	27	21	25	20	11	(393)
Independent	21	17	19	12	12	(400)

Question: *Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.*

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SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted among a nationwide sample of 1,227 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period February 20-23, 1992. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

TIMES MIRROR NEWS INTEREST INDEX
FEBRUARY 1992
N=1,227
February 20-23, 1992

SEX: 1[]Male 2[]Female

INTERVIEWER'S NAME: _____

TIME STARTED: _____

INTERVIEWER'S I.D.: _____

TIME FINISHED: _____

PAGE NUMBER: _____

LENGTH: _____

REPLICATE NUMBER: _____

REGION: 1 East
2 Midwest
3 South
4 West

STRATUM: 1 Stratum One
2 Stratum Two
3 Remainder

DATE: _____

INTRODUCTION: Hello, we are conducting a telephone opinion survey for leading newspapers and tv stations around the country. I'd like to ask a few questions of the youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home (IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the oldest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home?)

MY FIRST QUESTION IS...

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?

		NEWS INTEREST INDEX						
Feb		Jan	Nov	Oct	July	May	March	Jan 25
1992		1992	1991	1991	1991	1991	1991	1991
39	Approve	46	55	61	67	77	84	79
53	Disapprove	43	33	28	23	16	10	14
<u>8</u>	Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Q.2 What do you think is the most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world in the past 4 weeks? (DO NOT READ)

7 OTHER (SPECIFY)
1 DON'T KNOW/REFUSED
35 NONE

International Stories 12

Statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy 2

Middle East tensions 6

Break-up of Soviet Union 4

Domestic Stories 45

President Bush's State of the Union Address 1

Mike Tyson's rape trial 8

Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy 7

The breast implant controversy *

The Winter Olympics 8

The Democratic primary in New Hampshire 1

The Republican primary in New Hampshire 4

Charges that Arkansas Governor Clinton has had extra marital affairs 1

The controversy about Governor Clinton's joining ROTC to avoid the draft in 1969 *

New Hampshire Primary -- unspecified 5

Primary Elections -- unspecified 6

Governor Clinton -- unspecified *

Jeffrey Dahmer 4

Q.3 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (READ AND ROTATE LIST)

How closely did you follow stories about...(ITEM)?
(REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY)

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. President Bush's State of the Union Address	26	26	20	27	1=100
b. Statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy	34	32	21	12	1=100
c. Mike Tyson's rape trial	32	37	21	10	*=100
** d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	47	37	10	6	*=100
e. The breast implant controversy	24	39	24	13	*=100
f. The Winter Olympics	33	30	19	17	1=100
g. The Democratic primary in New Hampshire	19	31	26	24	*=100
h. The Republican primary in New Hampshire	19	31	26	23	1=100
i. Charges that Arkansas Governor Clinton has had extra marital affairs	15	28	32	24	1=100
j. The controversy about Governor Clinton's joining ROTC to avoid the draft in 1969	11	21	32	35	1=100

** Trend information on reports about U.S. economy

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
Feb/1992	47	37	10	6	*=100
Jan/1992	44	40	11	5	*=100
Oct/1991	36	38	16	9	1=100

Q.4 Which one of the stories I just mentioned, have you followed most closely? (DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)

	Story Followed <u>Most Closely</u>
a. President Bush's State of the Union Address	5
b. Statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy	5
c. Mike Tyson's rape trial	24
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	14
e. The breast implant controversy	7
f. The Winter Olympics	21
g. The Democratic primary in New Hampshire	6
h. The Republican primary in New Hampshire	4
i. Charges that Arkansas Governor Clinton has had extra marital affairs	5
j. The controversy about Governor Clinton's joining ROTC to avoid the draft in 1969	1
CAN'T SAY	<u>8</u>
	100

IF RESPONDENT SAID '99' CAN'T SAY IN Q.4, SKIP TO Q.6

Q.5 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.4); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	<u>Excel- lent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>N</u>
All stories	21	44	23	10	2=100	(1128)
Tyson rape trial	21	42	24	12	1=100	(273)
Winter Olympics	34	49	14	3	*=100	(258)
U.S. economy	8	41	33	15	3=100	(174)
Breast implants	25	40	24	9	2=100	(82)
Bush's State of the Union	15	51	26	5	3=100	(71)
Democratic N.H. primary	15	52	21	10	2=100	(87)
Republican N.H. primary	12	50	35	3	*=100	(62)
Clinton's problems	18	39	22	16	5=100	(68)

ASK ALL:

Q.6 In your opinion, which TV network has been doing the best job of covering the news lately - ABC, CBS, NBC or CNN?

<u>Feb</u> <u>1992</u>		<u>Oct</u> <u>1991</u>	<u>July</u> <u>1991</u>	<u>May</u> <u>1991</u>	<u>March</u> ¹ <u>1991</u>	<u>Sept</u> <u>1990</u>
19	ABC	17	18	18	12	21
18	CBS	14	14	13	8	14
14	NBC	13	13	14	10	13
37	CNN	42	41	41	58	27
<u>12</u> <u>100</u>	Don't know	<u>14</u> <u>100</u>	<u>14</u> <u>100</u>	<u>14</u> <u>100</u>	<u>12</u> <u>100</u>	<u>25</u> <u>100</u>

Q.7 So far, have you watched any of the televised debates between the Democratic candidates or haven't you had a chance to watch any of them?

16 Yes

84 No

*
100 Don't know

Q.8 Did you happen to watch President Bush's State of the Union Address on tv or didn't you have a chance to watch it?

48 Yes

52 No

*
100 Don't know

¹ In March, 1991 respondents were asked which network was doing the best job of covering the "crisis in the Gulf".

THINKING ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN SPECIFICALLY...

Q.9 All in all, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the presidential campaign so far; excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

11 Excellent
45 Good
32 Only Fair
7 Poor
5 Don't know
100

Q.9a How have you been getting most of your news about the Presidential election campaign? From television, from newspapers, from radio or from magazines? (ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS)

80 Television ask 9b
49 Newspapers
18 Radio
4 Magazines
3 Other
1 Can't say
155 Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses

If Television:

Q.9b Do you get most of your news about the presidential campaign from network tv news, from local tv news, or from CNN ? (ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS)

40 Network
37 Local
29 CNN
2 (DO NOT READ) Other
1 Can't say
109 Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT..

Form 2

Q.15a As you may know, one of the candidates for President has had cancer. Do you happen to know the name of that candidate? (DO NOT READ LIST)

1 George Bush
* Pat Buchanan
21 Paul Tsongas
1 Robert Kerrey
0 Bill Clinton
1 Tom Harkin
* Jerry Brown
48 Can't recall name
28 Unaware of candidate with cancer
100
(N=617)

While the presidential campaign has just begun both Democratic and Republican candidates are already beginning to concentrate on and emphasize certain themes. As I read from a list tell me whether or not you have heard of this theme.

(ROTATE THEMES)

FIRST... (PRECEDE EACH ITEM WITH: Have you heard of the theme ...?)

Q.16 "America's interests should come ahead of the world's interests?"

53 Heard of - ask 16b
47 Has not - go to 16c
100

Q.16b Which candidate do you most associate with this theme? (DO NOT READ)

4	George Bush
13	Pat Buchanan
3	Paul Tsongas
*	Robert Kerrey
4	Bill Clinton
1	Tom Harkin
1	Jerry Brown
<u>27</u>	Can't say
53	

Q.16c "The middle class should be given a tax cut?"

85	Heard of - ask 16d
<u>15</u>	Has not - go to 17
100	

Q.16d Which candidate do you most associate with this theme? (DO NOT READ)

17	George Bush
4	Pat Buchanan
4	Paul Tsongas
1	Robert Kerrey
9	Bill Clinton
2	Tom Harkin
1	Jerry Brown
<u>47</u>	Can't say
85	

Q.17 "Every American should be guaranteed health insurance?"

88 Heard of - ask 17b

12 Has not - go to 18
100

Q.17b Which candidate do you most associate with this theme?(DO NOT READ)

13 George Bush

2 Pat Buchanan

5 Paul Tsongas

6 Robert Kerrey

8 Bill Clinton

2 Tom Harkin

2 Jerry Brown

50 Can't say
88

Q.18 "Business and Government should form a partnership to improve American economic competitiveness?"

41 Heard of - ask 18b

59 Has not - go to 18c
100

Q.18b Which candidate do you most associate with this theme? (DO NOT READ)

9	George Bush
2	Pat Buchanan
6	Paul Tsongas
*	Robert Kerrey
2	Bill Clinton
*	Tom Harkin
1	Jerry Brown
<u>21</u>	Can't say
41	

ASK EVERYONE:

Q.18c In your opinion, which, if any of the candidates running for President would do the best job of looking out for the interests of black people in this country? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS)

11	George Bush
2	Pat Buchanan
6	Paul Tsongas
1	Robert Kerrey
7	Bill Clinton
1	Tom Harkin
4	Jerry Brown
60	Can't say
<u>8</u>	None
100	

Q.18d In your opinion, which if any of the candidates running for President would do the best job of looking out for the interests of white people in this country?
(DO NOT READ ANSWERS)

29	George Bush
8	Pat Buchanan
3	Paul Tsongas
1	Robert Kerrey
4	Bill Clinton
*	Tom Harkin
1	Jerry Brown
50	Can't say
$\frac{4}{100}$	None

Q.19 So far, do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage to the 1992 presidential campaign, too little coverage to the campaign, or the right amount of coverage?

Feb. 1992		Oct. 1991	May 1988	Oct. 1987
19	Too much	12	24	21
15	Too little	22	7	16
62	Right amount	58	62	58
$\frac{4}{100}$	(DON'T READ) Don't know	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$

Q.20 How much influence do you think news organizations have on which candidate becomes the Presidential nominee: too much, too little or about the right amount? (READ CATEGORIES 1-3)

Feb. 1992		Jan. 1992	Jan. 1988	Oct. 1987
58	Too much	53	51	59
5	Too little	4	4	5
33	About the right amount	40	37	31
$\frac{4}{100}$	(DON'T READ) Don't know	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$

IF RESPONDENT FOLLOWED ITEMS 3i OR 3j VERY OR FAIRLY CLOSELY ASK Q 21 - 22a:

Q.21 How responsibly have news organizations handled the controversies surrounding Governor Clinton's personal life and his draft status during the Vietnam war? Would you say... (READ CATEGORIES 1-4)

18 Very responsibly

41 Fairly responsibly

24 Not too responsibly, or

13 Not at all responsibly

4 (DON'T READ) Don't know
100
(N=655)

Q.22 Do you think it was important that voters learned these things in order to judge whether Bill Clinton would make a good President or don't you think it important that voters knew these things about Bill Clinton?

56 Important

40 Not important

4 (DON'T READ) Don't know
100
(N=655)

Q.22a Do you, yourself have reservations about Bill Clinton because of these charges, or don't you think they matter?

30 Have reservations

64 Doesn't matter

6 Don't know
100
(N=655)

Q.22b In your opinion, what is more responsible for the problems Bill Clinton has had in his campaign so far: the way the press has covered him or Bill Clinton's personal actions and views, themselves?

48 Press coverage

40 Clinton's himself

5 (DON'T READ) Both

* (DON'T READ) Neither

7 (DON'T READ) Don't know

100

(N=655)

ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SUBJECT...

Q.23 In your opinion what country in the world, if any represents the greatest danger to the United States? (DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS)

Feb/1992

Mar/1990

13	Russia, the Soviet Union, the CIS	32
2	Germany	3
*	Other European	*
31	Japan	8
8	China	8
0	Other Asian	*
12	Iraq	*
4	Iran	6
2	Libya	2
6	Other Mideastern	5
1	Cuba	3
*	Mexico	*
*	Other Latin American	8
0	Other (SPECIFY)	2
13	Can't say	13
5	None	6
<u>3</u>	The United States itself	4
100		

AGAIN, ON ANOTHER SUBJECT:

Q.23a Just prior to Clarence Thomas's confirmation vote someone broke the Senate's rules of confidentiality by telling the press that Anita Hill had accused Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas of sexual harassment.
Had you heard that the Senate is now investigating who leaked this story to the press?

48 Yes

52 No

0 Don't know
100

Form 1

Q23b The reporters and correspondents who first reported to the public that Anita Hill was charging Clarence Thomas with sexual harassment are refusing to reveal the names of their confidential sources for these stories. Do you think these reporters should be required to reveal their sources or do you think they should be allowed to keep them confidential?

30 Required to reveal

67 Allowed to keep confidential

3 (DON'T READ) Not sure
100
(N=610)

Form 2

Q23b The reporters and correspondents who first reported to the public that Anita Hill was charging Clarence Thomas with sexual harassment are refusing to reveal who leaked the story to them. Do you think these reporters should be required to reveal their sources or do you think they should be allowed to keep them confidential?

32 Required to reveal

63 Allowed to keep confidential

5 (DON'T READ) Not sure
100
(N=617)

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT..

Q.901 How often would you say you vote; always, nearly always, part of the time, or seldom?

- 41 Always
 32 Nearly always
 13 Part of the time
 11 Seldom
 0 (DO NOT READ) Other (SPECIFY)
 2 (DO NOT READ) Never vote
1 Don't know/no answer
 100

Q.902 I'd like to know how often, if ever you read certain types of publications. For each that I read tell me if you read them regularly, sometimes, hardly ever or never? (READ AND ROTATE)

	Regularly	Some- times	Hardly Ever	Never	(VOL) DK
a. A daily newspaper	71	19	5	4	1=100
b. News magazines such as Time, U.S. News and World Report or Newsweek	20	38	20	21	1=100
c. The National Enquirer, The Sun or The Star	5	12	16	67	*=100

Q.903 I'd like to know how often you watch or listen to certain programs. For each that I read, tell me if you watch or listen to it regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never. (READ AND ROTATE)

	Regularly	Some- times	Hardly Ever	Never	(VOL) DK
a. The network evening news	66	24	6	4	0=100
b. News magazine shows such as 60 minutes or 20/20	47	38	9	6	0=100
c. Programs on National Public Radio such as Morning Edition or All Things Considered	11	17	18	54	*=100
d. Cable News Network (CNN)	36	32	8	24	*=100
e. C-Span	7	18	16	54	5=100

TIMES MIRROR DATABASE

PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES

(1986 - 1992)

PERCENT FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY

- 80 Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (July 86)
- 73 Destruction caused by the San Francisco earthquake (Nov 89)
- 69 Little girl in Texas who was rescued after falling into a well (Oct 87)
- 67 War's end and the homecoming of U.S. forces from the Gulf (March 91)
- 66 Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia (Aug 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Oct 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Sept 90)
- 62 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Nov 90)
- 62 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Oct 90)
- 60 Invasion of Panama (Jan 90)
- 60 Destruction caused by Hurricane Hugo (Oct 89)
- 59 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Jan 91)
- 58 U.S. air strikes against Libya (July 86)
- 57 The plight of the American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq (Sept 90)
- 57 Recent increase in the price of gasoline (Aug 90)
- 56 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Sept 90)
- 53 Crash of a United Airlines DC-10 in Sioux City, Iowa (Aug 89)
- 52 Alaska Oil Spill (May 89)
- 51 The release of American hostages and other westerners from Iraq and Kuwait (Jan 91)
- 51 Supreme Court decision of flag burning (July 89)
- 50 Opening of the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany (Nov 89)
- 50 Flight of the space shuttle (Oct 88)
- 49 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Nov 90)
- 49 Murder of Marine Lt. Col. Higgins in Lebanon, and negotiations to free the other hostages in the Mideast (Aug 89)
- 49 Drought and its effects on American farmers (Aug 88)
- 48 TWA hostage crisis that took place last summer in Beirut, Lebanon (July 86)
- 47 **REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY (FEB 92)**
- 47 Breakup of the Soviet Union following the failed coup to depose of Mikhail Gorbachev (Oct 91)
- 47 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Oct 90)
- 47 Political upheaval in China (July 89)
- 47 Supreme Court decision on abortion (July 89)
- 46 Videotaped beating by Los Angeles police of a suspect they apprehended in an auto chase (March 91)
- 46 Nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union (July 86)
- 46 Freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast (May 90)
- 44 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 1992)
- 44 The release of the last American hostages being held in Lebanon (Dec 91)
- 43 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Dec 91)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 43 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Oct 88)
- 42 Hot weather this summer and the greenhouse effect (Aug 88)
- 42 Downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a U.S. Navy ship (Aug 88)
- 41 News regarding harassment charges raised against supreme court nominee Clarence Thomas (Oct 91)
- 40 Bush administration's plan to deal with this country's drug problem (Sept 89)
- 40 The stock market crash (Oct 87)

- 39 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Nov 90)
- 39 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Aug 88)
- 38 President Bush's heart problem (May 91)
- 38 News about the candidates and elections in your state (Nov 90)
- 38 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the U.S. for a Summit meeting (June 90)
- 38 Drug use and efforts to combat it (Jan 90)
- 38 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Sept 87)
- 37 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Oct 87)
- 37 Stories about Dan Quayle, the Republican Vice-Presidential candidate (Aug 88)
- 37 Sentencing of Oliver North (July 89)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Oct 91)
- 36 The situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq and allied attempts to help them (May 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (March 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 91)
- 36 The murder of five people by a serial killer around the University of Florida campus in Gainesville (Sept 90)
- 35 Federal Reserve Bank's interest rate reduction (Jan 1992)
- 35 The major job cuts announced by General Motors (Jan 1992)
- 35 The Standoff in Baghdad between the Iraqis and UN weapons inspectors (Oct 91)
- 35 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (July 1991)
- 35 Attempts to change the abortion laws (Dec 89)
- 35 Hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in the Mediterranean (July 86)
- 35 Explosion and fire on the U.S. Battleship Iowa (May 89)
- 34 **STATEMENTS BY JAPANESE LEADERS THAT AMERICAN WORKERS ARE LAZY (FEB 92)**
- 34 Civil war in Iraq between Shiite Iraqis and forces loyal to Saddam Hussein (March 91)
- 34 Congressional and administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement (Nov 90)
- 34 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Oct 90)
- 34 Reports about flooding in Texas and other southwestern states (June 90)
- 34 The war between the Colombian government and the major drug traffickers (Sept 89)
- 33 **THE WINTER OLYMPICS (FEB 92)**
- 33 The nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court of Clarence Thomas to replace retiring Justice Thurgood Marshall (July 1991)
- 33 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (May 91)
- 33 Crash of the Colombian airliner near Kennedy airport in New York (Feb 90)
- 33 Congressional hearings about the Iran-Contra affair (Sept 87)
- 33 Guilty verdict in the trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Oct 89)
- 32 **MIKE TYSON'S RAPE TRIAL (FEB 92)**
- 32 Criticisms of George Bush for being inconsistent in what he said about taxes and what he said about Persian Gulf policy (Nov 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 31 Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as the Soviet Union came to an official end (Jan 1992)
- 31 Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (Dec 91)
- 31 President Bush's announcement of major nuclear arms reductions (Oct 91)
- 31 The closing of military bases around the country (July 1991)
- 31 Celebration of Earth Day (May 90)
- 31 The World Series (Oct 88)
- 31 Flight of East German refugees to West Germany (Oct 89)
- 31 Oliver North trial (May 89)
- 30 The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the Soviet Union (Dec 91)
- 30 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Aug 90)
- 30 Freeing of jailed black South African leader Nelson Mandela (March 90)
- 30 Banishment of Pete Rose from baseball for life (Sept 89)
- 30 The Democratic convention (Aug 88)
- 30 President Bush's call for higher taxes to help reduce the federal deficit (July 90)

- 29 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Sept 90)
- 29 Reports about the fires in Southern California (July 90)
- 29 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (April 90)
- 29 Suicide in Boston of Charles Stuart who murdered his pregnant wife and blamed it on a black man (Feb 90)
- 29 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Jan 90)
- 29 Political changes in East Germany and the flight of refugees to West Germany (Nov 89)
- 29 Attack and sexual assault on a female jogger in Central Park, New York, by a group of youths (May 89)
- 29 Failed coup attempt against Panamanian strongman Noriega (Oct 89)
- 28 The death of 87 people in a fire at a social club in the Bronx, New York (April 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in the Soviet Union (March 90)
- 28 Arrest of Washington's Mayor Barry on drug use charges (Feb 90)
- 28 The revolution in Romania (Jan 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Dec 89)
- 28 Problems at nuclear reactor plants (Oct 88)
- 28 The end of Gary Hart's candidacy and the Donna Rice allegations (Sept 87)
- 27 the William Kennedy Smith rape trial (Dec 91)
- 27 Deployment of U.S. marines to Liberia to protect the lives of Americans caught in the civil war (Aug 90)
- 27 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (May 90)
- 27 Acquittal of the owners of the McMartin Day Care Center in California who were charged with sexually abusing children (Feb 90)
- 27 The NFL playoffs (Jan 90)
- 27 The Republican convention (Aug 88)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 26 **PRESIDENT BUSH'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS (FEB 92)**
- 26 Charges that the White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes and government cars for personal trips (July 1991)
- 26 Concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President (May 91)
- 26 Bush/Gorbachev summit meeting in Helsinki (Sept 90)
- 26 The death of Hank Gathers, a college basketball player, during a game (April 90)
- 26 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Feb 90)
- 26 Passage in Congress of a bill to bail out ailing savings and loan institutions (Aug 89)
- 25 Supreme court decision allowing laws that bar federally funded agencies from discussing abortion (July 1991)
- 25 Supreme Court's hearing of arguments in a Missouri abortion case (May 89)
- 24 **THE BREAST IMPLANT CONTROVERSY (FEB 92)**
- 24 Charges that Reagan campaign officials made a deal with Iran to hold up release of the hostages until after the 1980 Presidential campaign (July 1991)
- 24 Charges that White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes for personal trips (May 91)
- 24 Supreme Court decision that found laws against flag burning unconstitutional and the attempt in Congress to amend the Constitution (July 90)
- 24 Nelson Mandela's visit to the U.S. (July 90)
- 24 Deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope (May 90)
- 24 Difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms (May 90)
- 24 The NCAA Basketball playoffs (April 90)
- 24 Supreme Court decision regarding a person's right to die (July 90)
- 23 Cyclone that devastated Bangladesh (May 91)
- 23 Attempt in Idaho to pass a bill that would severely restrict abortions (April 90)
- 23 Greyhound bus drivers' strike (April 90)
- 23 Discussion of the reunification of Germany (March 90)
- 23 The World Series (Nov 89)
- 22 Protests and demonstrations at abortion clinics in Wichita, Kansas (Oct 91)
- 22 Congressional hearings about U.S. Persian Gulf policy (Jan 91)
- 22 Reunification of Germany (Oct 90)
- 22 Washington Mayor Barry's trial (July 90)
- 22 The 54 year old Oregon woman suffering from Alzheimers who ended her life by using a suicide machine (July 90)
- 22 President Bush's visit to Colombia to attend a drug summit (March 90)
- 22 The Super Bowl (Feb 90)
- 22 Letter bombings of federal judges (Jan 90)
- 22 Discoveries made by the spacecraft Voyager 2 (Sept 89)
- 22 Trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Sept 89)
- 22 April hijacking of a Kuwaiti airplane by Shiite Moslems (May 88)
- 22 Cease fire in the war between Iran and Iraq (Aug 88)
- 22 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (May 88)
- 22 Charges that Pete Rose has bet on baseball games (July 89)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 21 Alleged rape of a young woman at the Kennedy family's Palm Beach estate (May 91)
- 21 Controversy surrounding the way Roseanne Barr sang the National Anthem at a San Diego Padres baseball game (Aug 90)
- 21 Tensions between Moscow and the Baltic Republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania who wish to secede from the Soviet Union (June 90)
- 21 Discussions about German reunification (April 90)
- 21 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe (March 90)
- 21 Scandal involving HUD (Aug 89)
- 20 Mikhail Gorbachev's political problems in the Soviet Union (March 91)
- 20 Resignation of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the election of her successor (Jan 91)
- 20 The murder on a New York subway platform of a Utah man attempting to protect his family from attack by teenage muggers (Sept 90)
- 20 Earthquake in Iran (July 90)
- 20 Gorbachev/Bush summit (Dec 89)
- 20 Attempts by the U.S. government to depose General Noriega in Panama (May 88)
- 20 Post-season baseball playoffs (Oct 89)

- 19 **THE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE (FEB 92)**
- 19 **THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE (FEB 92)**
- 19 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Aug 90)
- 19 Elections in Nicaragua (March 90)
- 19 Coup attempt against the Filipino government (Dec 89)
- 19 Attempts in Congress to repeal the new catastrophic health insurance plan (Oct 89)
- 19 Incidents of racial violence in New York City and Virginia Beach (Sept 89)
- 19 Discussions of a U.S. Soviet arms agreement (Sept 87)
- 18 News about the candidates and election campaigns in your state (Oct 90)
- 18 Special meetings between the Bush Administration and Congressional Leaders to find ways to reduce the federal deficit (June 90)
- 18 Continuing news about the Savings and Loan scandal (June 90)
- 18 Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates (May 90)
- 18 Senator Moynihan's proposal to cut social security taxes (Feb 90)
- 18 The stock market crash (May 88)
- 18 Conflict in the Middle East between Palestinians and the Israelis in the occupied territories (May 88)
- 17 President Bush's decision to lift the trade embargo on South Africa (July 1991)
- 17 Racial tension in New York City resulting from the Bensonhurst trial verdict and the black boycott of Korean grocers (June 90)
- 17 Discussions between the American and Japanese governments about trade issues (April 90)
- 17 A custody case involving a mother who went to jail and a little child taken to New Zealand by her grandparents (March 90)
- 17 Nomination of Robert Bork to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court (Sept 87)
- 16 David Duke's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 16 Nomination of David Souter to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace Justice William Brennan (Aug 90)
- 16 Washington DC Mayor Marion Barry's trial ending in a mistrial (Aug 90)
- 16 Financial troubles of Donald Trump (July 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 16 Dispute between the President and Congress over allowing Chinese students to remain in America (Feb 90)
- 15 **CHARGES THAT ARK. GOVERNOR CLINTON HAS HAD EXTRA-MARITAL AFFAIRS (FEB 92)**
- 15 President Bush's decision to postpone loan guarantees to Israel (Oct 91)
- 15 Resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze (Jan 91)
- 15 Senate confirmation of Supreme Court Justice David Souter (Oct 90)
- 15 Controversy over the exclusion of blacks from membership in many country clubs at which national golf championship matches are played (Aug 90)
- 15 Education Summit held by Bush and the nation's Governors (Oct 89)
- 15 Ethics committee's investigation of Speaker of the House Jim Wright (May 89)
- 15 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 87)
- 15 Conflict of interest allegations about Attorney General Ed Meese (May 88)
- 15 Scandal involving HUD (July 89)
- 14 President Bush's educational reform plan (May 91)
- 14 Political unrest and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union (May 91)
- 14 Renewed fighting between government and the rebels in El Salvador (Dec 89)
- 14 House approval of a cut in the capital gains tax (Oct 89)
- 14 Spy scandal involving a U.S. Diplomat in Vienna (Aug 89)
- 14 Coverage of Democratic and Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Sept 87)
- 14 Pending divorce between Mike Tyson and Robin Givens (Oct 88)
- 13 The BCCI international banking scandal (Oct 91)
- 13 U.S. Department of Education prohibition of racially based college scholarships (Jan 91)
- 13 Worsening economic conditions in the Soviet Union (Sept 90)
- 13 Civil unrest and ethnic violence in Soviet Azerbaijan (Feb 90)
- 13 Resumption of fighting in Nicaragua between the Contras and government forces (Nov 89)
- 13 Elections in Virginia, New Jersey, New York City and other localities (Nov 89)
- 13 News about the Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Oct 88)
- 12 Nomination of Robert Gates to head the CIA (Oct 91)
- 12 News about the democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 91)
- 12 Russian President Boris Yeltsin's election victory and visit to the U.S. (July 1991)
- 12 The findings of the committee that investigated five senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (March 91)
- 10 Major League Baseball's decision to force George Steinbrenner to give up active control of the New York Yankees (Aug 90)
- 12 Pledge of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to end the armed struggle in South Africa (Aug 90)
- 12 Marital breakup of Donald and Ivana Trump (March 90)
- 12 Solidarity's role in governing Poland (July 89)
- 11 **THE CONTROVERSY RE GOVERNOR CLINTON'S JOINING ROTC TO AVOID THE DRAFT IN 1969 (FEB 92)**
- 11 The outbreak of civil war in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia (Jan 1992)
- 11 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Jan 1992)
- 11 Debate in Washington about a new civil rights bill (July 1991)
- 11 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (July 1991)
- 11 The incident in Gaza in which a deranged Israeli killed seven Palestinians and the West bank riots that followed (June 90)

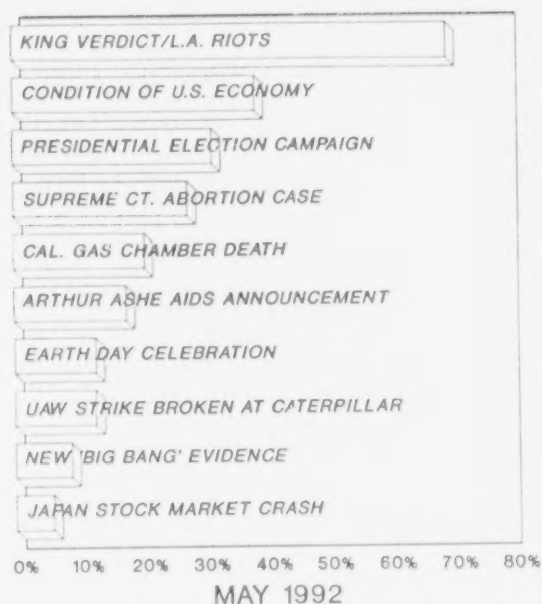
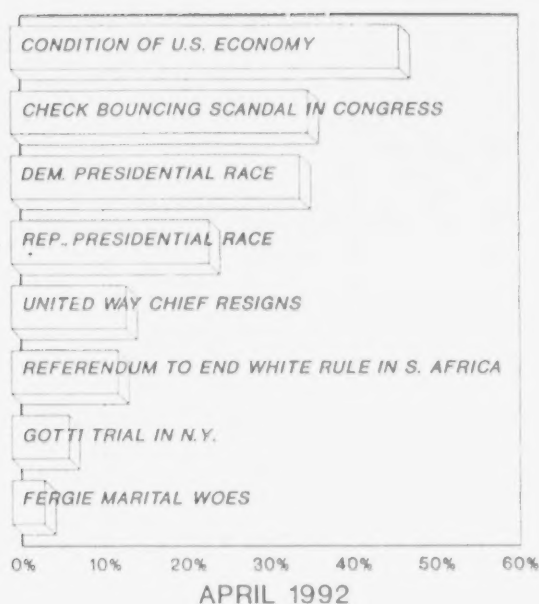
PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY

- 11 Legalization of banned black opposition groups in South Africa and the promise to free Nelson Mandela (Feb 90)
- 10 Mario Cuomo's decision not to seek the Democratic presidential nomination (Jan 1992)
- 10 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 10 Japanese purchase of Rockefeller center in New York City (Dec 89)
- 10 The spending and tax proposals made by Congressman Dan Rostenkowski to help reduce the budget deficit (April 90)
- 10 Academy Awards (April 90)

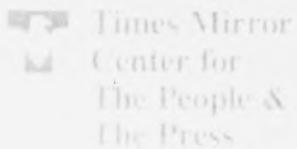
- 9 Purchase of entertainment giant, MCA by the Japanese consumer electronics company, Matsushita (Jan 91)
- 9 The investigation of five U.S. Senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (Jan 91)
- 9 Aids conference in San Francisco (July 90)
- 9 May day protests in Moscow (May 90)
- 9 Bankruptcy of Drexel Burnham Lambert Inc. (March 90)
- 9 Trial of Hotel owner Leona Helmsley for tax evasion (Sept 89)
- 9 Stories about the 20th anniversary of the Woodstock Music Festival (Aug 89)
- 8 The resignation of White House Chief of Staff John Sununu (Dec 91)
- 8 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Oct 91)
- 8 The release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan (May 91)
- 8 The murder in New York city of Jewish militant rabbi Meir Kahane (Nov 90)
- 7 First reports from the 1990 U.S. census (Sept 90)
- 7 Pat Buchanan's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 6 William Bennett's change of mind about heading the Republican National Committee (Jan 91)
- 6 Continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and in other republics of the Soviet Union (Nov 90)
- 6 United Nations Children's Summit held in New York (Oct 90)
- 6 Elections in Romania (June 90)
- 6 The visit to the United States of Vaclav Havel, the new president of Czechoslovakia (March 90)
- 6 Trip of high ranking officials to China (Jan 90)
- 6 Scandal involving the Japanese Prime Minister and other high ranking officials (May 89)
- 6 The scandal involving Congressman Barney Frank and a male prostitute (Oct 89)
- 5 The conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Dec 91)
- 4 Dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto by Pakistan's President (Aug 90)
- 4 Civil war in Cambodia (May 90)
- 2 Tom Cruise's separation from his wife (April 90)

Times Mirror News Interest Index

Public Interest and Awareness of the News



 **Times Mirror Center**
for The People & The Press



FOR RELEASE: FRIDAY, MAY 8, 1992, A.M.

**Times Mirror News Interest Index
May 1992**

**Public Interest and
Awareness of the News**

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Top Stories

While news about the Rodney King verdict and the Los Angeles riots clearly dominated the public's interest, reports about the condition of the economy were still very closely followed by four in ten Americans (39%). But attention to the economy dropped significantly since Times Mirror's March and February polls (47% and 47% respectively). The percentage of Americans following stories about the economy very closely is now at its lowest point since October 1991. This decrease in concern about the economy is especially pronounced among Americans ages 18-29, who are *half* as likely as those over 50 to follow these stories very closely (25% vs. 50%).

Despite the fact that both the Republican and Democratic nominations are all but locked up, interest in the Presidential campaign remained strong, with 32% following stories about the campaign very closely. Four years ago, when the Democratic nomination was still more of a contest, public interest in the campaign was lower than it is today; in May 1988, only 22% followed stories about the campaign very closely.

The Supreme Court's deliberations on a Pennsylvania law that would restrict a woman's right to abortion were very closely followed by 28% of Americans, which is comparable to the percent that very closely followed the Court's upholding of the "gag rule" in July 1991 (25%) and the *Webster* decision in May 1989 (25%). As with other stories about abortion, women under thirty were the most attentive (40%), but their male counterparts showed a strikingly low level of interest: only 19% of men under 30 followed this very closely.

The celebration of Earth Day received much less attention than it did two years ago when it celebrated its 20th anniversary. Only 13% followed Earth Day coverage very closely, compared with 31% who followed it very closely on its twentieth anniversary in May 1990.

Other stories that were very closely followed include: the execution in California of convicted killer Robert Alton Harris (21%), tennis star Arthur Ashe's announcement that he has AIDS (18%), the end of the UAW strike against Caterpillar Tractor (13%), the discovery of scientific evidence of the *Big Bang* theory (9%), and the stock market crash in Japan (6%).

Press Evaluations

The press got mixed ratings for its coverage of the King verdict and the riots that followed. Sixty-one percent thought it was excellent (23%) or good (38%), but nearly four in ten (37%) thought it was only fair (21%) or poor (16%). Blacks were much more critical of the media coverage than whites: 52% of blacks said the press did an *only fair* (24%) or *poor* job (28%), compared with 34% of whites who gave the media a negative assessment for this story.

The press coverage of the Presidential campaign received more negative ratings than it did in the last Times Mirror survey. In March, 63% gave the press an excellent or good rating for its coverage of the campaign, and 34% rated it as only fair or poor. The current survey found 54% saying the press did an excellent or good job, and 43% saying it did an only fair or poor job.

Forty percent named CNN as the network doing the best job covering the news, and the continuous coverage of the violence in Los Angeles may have helped boost CNN's ratings up slightly from March and February. After receiving ratings in the low forties throughout the last half of 1991, CNN, while still leading the pack, had slipped to 37% in the February poll and 36% in March.

Public Information

Most Americans did not know that both the Senate and the House of Representatives are currently controlled by Democrats. Forty-eight percent know that the Democrats have a majority in the House while 54% know that the Democrats control the Senate. However, only 38% knew that the Democrats have a majority in both houses.

Americans who were knowledgeable about the Congressional majorities were more likely than those who weren't to have said that it makes a difference if the White House and Congress are controlled by the same political party. A plurality (34%) of those who knew that the Democrats control Congress said that it was best for one political party to control the White House and the Congress, while 28% said it was better for one party to control each and 28% said it doesn't make much difference. A majority (53%) of those who were incorrect about both houses said it doesn't matter much one way or the other.

Most Americans (59%) knew that Ross Perot is still considering running for President. Seventeen percent believed he had already decided to run, and 24% were unsure or couldn't say.

Only 13% of Americans correctly identified Peru as the country whose President had suspended Parliament and closed the courts. Nearly three-quarters (73%) offered no answer, and 14% named a country other than Peru.

In contrast, 47% knew that France was the home of a new Disney park. Twenty-one percent named countries other than France, and 32% could not say.

Other Campaign News Sources

Although the regular audience for late night comedy shows is small, 58% of the public say they regularly or at least sometimes look in on one of the late night comedy shows such as *"The Tonight Show," "Arsenio Hall," "David Letterman,"* or *"Saturday Night Live."*

For some Americans, particularly young people who generally don't follow politics closely, these shows are a source of information about the Presidential campaign. Twenty percent of the late night audience say they sometimes hear things about the election or the Presidential campaign on these programs that they hadn't heard before.

Young people are much more likely than older people to get new campaign information from comedians. One-third (32%) of the under 30 audience say that they hear things about campaign politics they hadn't heard before on comedy programs, compared with 20% of 30-49 year-olds and 13% of those over 50.

Across all age groups, Johnny Carson was singled out as the comedian with the best political jokes (18%), followed by Arsenio Hall (12%) and Saturday Night Live (10%). But 18-29 year-olds preferred the political humor of Arsenio (20%) and SNL (20%) to Carson (15%).

Forty-four percent of Americans say they sometimes listen to radio programs such as the Larry King Show or the Rush Limbaugh Show, which allow listeners to call in and discuss politics and other social issues. One-quarter (25%) of this audience said they had heard things on talk radio shows about candidates or the election that they hadn't heard before. Listeners with household incomes over \$50,000 (31%) and men over 30 (30%) were the most likely to get new information from talk radio, and women under 30 were the least likely (14%).

PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	<i>Arthur Ashe's Announce- ment He Has AIDS</i>	<i>Cele- bration of Earth Day</i>	<i>Supreme Courts Deliberations About the Legality of Restrictions on Abortion in PA</i>	<i>Reports About the Condition of the U.S Economy</i>	<i>Execution in Cal. of Robert Alton Harris</i>	<i>N</i>
Total	18	13	28	39	21	(1301)
Sex						
Male	18	12	21	41	22	(645)
Female	18	14	34	37	20	(656)
Race						
White	16	12	28	38	20	(1052)
*Hispanic	16	14	23	30	18	(86)
Black	36	17	30	49	24	(175)
Age						
Under 30	14	16	29	25	19	(328)
30-49	17	13	28	39	22	(524)
50 +	22	10	26	50	21	(434)
Education						
College graduate	21	9	34	45	18	(363)
Other college	16	13	30	38	21	(363)
High school grad.	16	13	23	38	19	(424)
Less than h.s. grad.	21	18	28	37	28	(148)
Region						
East	23	13	38	42	18	(317)
Midwest	16	11	26	36	17	(351)
South	19	13	26	41	18	(456)
West	12	16	21	39	35	(177)
Party ID						
Republican	11	12	29	36	18	(350)
Democrat	22	14	31	48	27	(442)
Independent	18	13	25	35	19	(466)

Question:

Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

*The designation, hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

CONTINUED...

	<i>Stock Market Crash In Japan</i>	<i>Presiden- tial Election Campaign</i>	<i>Verdict in the Rodney King Case and the Riots That Followed</i>	<i>End of UAW Strike Against Caterpillar Tractor</i>	<i>Discovery of Scientific Evidence of the Beginning of the Universe</i>
Total	6	32	70	13	9
Sex					
Male	8	33	70	17	11
Female	4	30	71	9	6
Race					
White	5	31	69	13	8
*Hispanic	12	21	65	8	13
Black	9	38	83	13	8
Age					
Under 30	3	25	75	5	7
30-49	5	30	71	13	8
50 +	9	38	67	18	10
Education					
College graduate	8	34	72	10	12
Other college	5	32	73	14	13
High school grad.	4	29	68	11	4
Less than h.s. grad.	9	34	69	18	8
Region					
East	5	34	72	11	9
Midwest	7	29	67	18	8
South	6	34	70	11	9
West	6	27	75	11	9
Party ID					
Republican	5	28	64	9	11
Democrat	8	40	78	17	7
Independent	5	28	70	13	8

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

*The designation, hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted among a nationwide sample of 1,301 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period April 30 - May 3, 1992. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

TIMES MIRROR CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS
NATIONAL POLITICAL SURVEY #5
APRIL 30 - MAY 3, 1992
N=1,301

SEX: 1[]Male 2[]Female

INTERVIEWER'S NAME: _____

TIME STARTED: _____

INTERVIEWER'S I.D.: _____

TIME FINISHED: _____

PAGE NUMBER: _____

LENGTH: _____

REPLICATE NUMBER: _____

REGION: 1 East
2 Midwest
3 South
4 West

STRATUM: 1 Stratum One
2 Stratum Two
3 Remainder

DATE: _____

INTRODUCTION: Hello, we are conducting a telephone opinion survey for leading newspapers and tv stations around the country. I'd like to ask a few questions of the youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home (IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the oldest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home?)

MY FIRST QUESTION IS...

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Q.2 What do you think is the most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world in the past 4 weeks? (DO NOT READ)

2 OTHER (SPECIFY)

* DON'T KNOW

* REFUSED

11 NONE

International Stories

The stock market crash in Japan

0

Domestic Stories

87

Tennis star Arthur Ashe's announcement that he has AIDS

*

The celebration of Earth Day

*

The Supreme Court's deliberations about the legality of restrictions on abortion in Pennsylvania

1

Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy

1

The execution in California of convicted killer Robert Alton Harris

0

The Presidential election campaign

2

The verdict in the Rodney King case and the riots and disturbances that followed

81

The end of the UAW strike against Caterpillar Tractor

*

The discovery of scientific evidence of the beginnings of the universe

*

The California earthquake

2

The Chicago flood

*

Q.3 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (READ AND ROTATE LIST)

		<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
a.	Tennis star Arthur Ashe's announcement that he has AIDS	18	31	30	21	*=100
b.	The celebration of Earth Day May/1990	13 31	25 37	35 20	26 12	1=100 *=100
c.	The Supreme Court's deliberations about the legality of restrictions on abortion in Pennsylvania	28	34	24	13	1=100
d.	Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	39	39	15	6	1=100
	Mar/1992	47	38	11	4	*=100
	Feb/1992	47	37	10	6	*=100
	Jan/1992	44	40	11	5	*=100
	Oct/1991	36	38	16	9	1=100
e.	The execution in California of convicted killer Robert Alton Harris	21	31	28	19	1=100
f.	The stock market crash in Japan	6	16	33	43	2=100
g.	The Presidential election campaign	32	44	16	8	*=100
i.	The end of the UAW strike against Caterpillar Tractor	13	24	25	36	2=100
j.	The discovery of scientific evidence of the beginnings of the universe	9	19	30	40	2=100

Q.4 Which one of the stories I just mentioned, have you followed most closely? (DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)

	Story Followed Most Closely
a. Tennis star Arthur Ashe's announcement that he has AIDS	2
b. The celebration of Earth Day	2
c. The Supreme Court's deliberations about the legality of restrictions on abortion in Pennsylvania	5
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	4
e. The execution in California of convicted killer Robert Alton Harris	2
f. The stock market crash in Japan	1
g. The Presidential election campaign	12
h. The verdict in the Rodney King case and the riots and disturbances that followed	63
i. The end of the UAW strike against Caterpillar Tractor	2
j. The discovery of scientific evidence of the beginnings of the universe	1
Can't say	<u>6</u> 100

IF RESPONDENT SAID '99' CAN'T SAY IN Q.4, SKIP TO Q.6

Q.5 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.4); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		Presidential Election Campaign	Verdict in the Rodney King Case and the Riots
19	Excellent	10	22
39	Good	44	38
24	Only Fair	33	22
16	Poor	10	16
<u>2</u>	Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100
		(166)	(814)

ASK ALL:

Q.6 In your opinion, which TV network has been doing the best job of covering the news lately - ABC, CBS, NBC or CNN?

May 1992		Mar 1992	Feb 1992	Oct 1991	July 1991	May 1991	Mar ¹ 1991
20	ABC	20	19	17	18	18	12
14	CBS	17	18	14	14	13	8
14	NBC	14	14	13	13	14	10
40	CNN	36	37	42	41	41	58
<u>12</u>	Don't know	<u>13</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>12</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100

(NOTE: SKIP Q7 IF FOLLOWED PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN MOST CLOSELY IN Q4. MOVE ANSWER FROM Q5 INTO Q7)

¹ In March, 1991 respondents were asked which network was doing the best job of covering the "crisis in the Gulf".

THINKING ABOUT THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN SPECIFICALLY...

Q.7 All in all, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the presidential campaign so far; excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

<u>May</u> <u>1992</u>		<u>Mar</u> <u>1992</u>	<u>Feb</u> <u>1992</u>
10	Excellent	12	11
44	Good	51	45
33	Only Fair	28	32
10	Poor	6	7
<u>3</u> 100	Don't know	<u>3</u> 100	<u>5</u> 100

NOW I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT SOME THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN IN THE NEWS - NOT EVERYONE WILL HAVE HEARD ABOUT THEM

Q.9 In what country did the President recently suspend Parliament and curb the courts as a means of dealing with a rebel uprising and curtailing drug trafficking?

13	Peru
14	Other
<u>73</u> 100	Don't know

Q.10 How much have you heard lately about the third party candidacy of Ross Perot? (READ CATEGORIES 1-4)

20 A great deal

31 A fair amount

23 Not too much

25 Little or nothing

1
100 Don't Know

GO TO Q.12

Q.11 Do you happen to know if Ross Perot decided to run as a third party candidate or is he still considering whether or not to run for President? (DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS)

17 Has decided to run

59 Still thinking about it

24
100 Can't say

Q.12 Do you happen to know in which country a new Disney park recently opened? (DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS)

47 France

21 Other

32
100 Can't say

Q.13 Do you happen to know which political party has a majority in the U.S. Senate? (DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS)

17 Republican

55 Democrat

28
100 Can't say

Q.14 Do you happen to know which political party has a majority in the U.S. House of Representatives? (DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS)

12 Republican
49 Democrat
39 Can't say
100

ON A DIFFERENT SUBJECT...

Q.16 How have you been getting most of your news about the Presidential election campaign? From television, from newspapers, from radio or from magazines? (ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS)

Q.17 Do you get most of your news about the presidential campaign from network tv news, from local tv news, or from CNN? (ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS)

May 1992		Mar 1992	Feb 1992
86	Television	83	80
46	Network	41	40
40	Local	32	37
34	CNN	30	29
4	(DO NOT READ) Other	2	2
<u>1</u>	Can't say	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
125*		107*	109*
51	Newspapers	48	49
17	Radio	14	18
6	Magazines	4	4
3	Other	3	3
<u>1</u>	Can't say	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>
164*		152**	155**

*Total exceeds the % who mentioned tv due to multiple responses

**Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses

ON A DIFFERENT SUBJECT...

Q.34 Generally, what's the better situation: that a President's political party also have a controlling majority in Congress or is it better that one party control the White House, while the other party controls the Congress... or don't you think it matters too much one way or the other?

26 President's party also control Congress

23 One party control each

40 Doesn't matter

11 Can't say
100

Q.902 I'd like to know how often, if ever, you watch any of these late-night comedians or comedy programs. For each one, tell me if you watch regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never:

	<u>Regularly</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Hardly Ever</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Johnny Carson	6	24	29	41	*=100
b. Jay Leno	4	17	23	55	1=100
c. David Letterman	3	20	25	52	*=100
d. Arsenio Hall	9	26	20	45	*=100
e. Saturday Night Live	9	24	21	46	*=100
f. Dennis Miller	2	7	13	73	5=100

(NOTE: IF 4 OR 5 IN ALL ITEMS IN Q902 A-F, SKIP TO Q905)

Q.903 Do you ever hear things about the candidates or the Presidential election campaign on these shows that you haven't heard before?

21 { Yes

53 No

5 Don't know

21 Never watch
100

Q.904 Which one of the late-night comedians or comedy shows has the best political humor this year - the best jokes about the Presidential candidates and the campaign:

18 Johnny Carson
7 Jay Leno
4 David Letterman
12 Arsenio Hall
10 Saturday Night Live
3 Dennis Miller
1 Other (VOL)
2 None (VOL)
22 Don't know
21 Never watch
100

Q.905 Do you ever listen to talk radio programs such as the Larry King Show or the Rush Limbaugh Show, where listeners can call in and give their opinions about politics and other issues?

44 Yes - GO TO Q.906
54 No
2 Don't know
100

IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' YES IN Q.905 ASK:

Q.906 Do you ever hear things on talk radio about the candidates or the Presidential election campaign that you haven't heard before?

25 Yes
19 No
* Don't know
56 Never listen
100

TIMES MIRROR DATABASE

PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES

(1986 - 1992)

PERCENT FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY

- 80 Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (July 86)
- 73 Destruction caused by the San Francisco earthquake (Nov 89)
- 70 **VERDICT IN RODNEY KING CASE AND FOLLOWING RIOTS AND DISTURBANCES**
(MAY 92)
- 69 Little girl in Texas who was rescued after falling into a well (Oct 87)
- 67 War's end and the homecoming of U.S. forces from the Gulf (March 91)
- 66 Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia (Aug 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Oct 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Sept 90)
- 62 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Nov 90)
- 62 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Oct 90)
- 60 Invasion of Panama (Jan 90)
- 60 Destruction caused by Hurricane Hugo (Oct 89)
- 59 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Jan 91)
- 58 U.S. air strikes against Libya (July 86)
- 57 The plight of the American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq (Sept 90)
- 57 Recent increase in the price of gasoline (Aug 90)
- 56 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Sept 90)
- 53 Crash of a United Airlines DC-10 in Sioux City, Iowa (Aug 89)
- 52 Alaska Oil Spill (May 89)
- 51 The release of American hostages and other westerners from Iraq and Kuwait (Jan 91)
- 51 Supreme Court decision of flag burning (July 89)
- 50 Opening of the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany (Nov 89)
- 50 Flight of the space shuttle (Oct 88)
- 49 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Nov 90)
- 49 Murder of Marine Lt. Col. Higgins in Lebanon, and negotiations to free the other hostages
in the Mideast (Aug 89)
- 49 Drought and its effects on American farmers (Aug 88)
- 48 TWA hostage crisis that took place last summer in Beirut, Lebanon (July 86)
- 47 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Apr 92)
- 47 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Feb 92)
- 47 Breakup of the Soviet Union following the failed coup to depose of Mikhail Gorbachev
(Oct 91)
- 47 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Oct 90)
- 47 Political upheaval in China (July 89)
- 47 Supreme Court decision on abortion (July 89)
- 46 Videotaped beating by Los Angeles police of a suspect they apprehended in an
auto chase (March 91)
- 46 Nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union (July 86)
- 46 Freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast (May 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 44 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 1992)
- 44 The release of the last American hostages being held in Lebanon (Dec 91)
- 43 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Dec 91)
- 43 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Oct 88)
- 42 Hot weather this summer and the greenhouse effect (Aug 88)
- 42 Downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a U.S. Navy ship (Aug 88)
- 41 News regarding harassment charges raised against supreme court nominee Clarence Thomas (Oct 91)
- 40 Bush administration's plan to deal with this country's drug problem (Sept 89)
- 40 The stock market crash (Oct 87)

39 REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY (MAY 92)

- 39 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Nov 90)
- 39 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Aug 88)
- 38 President Bush's heart problem (May 91)
- 38 News about the candidates and elections in your state (Nov 90)
- 38 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the U.S. for a Summit meeting (June 90)
- 38 Drug use and efforts to combat it (Jan 90)
- 38 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Sept 87)
- 37 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Oct 87)
- 37 Stories about Dan Quayle, the Republican Vice-Presidential candidate (Aug 88)
- 37 Sentencing of Oliver North (July 89)
- 36 Congressional check bouncing scandal (Apr 92)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Oct 91)
- 36 The situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq and allied attempts to help them (May 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (March 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 91)
- 36 The murder of five people by a serial killer around the University of Florida campus in Gainesville (Sept 90)
- 35 Race for the Democratic presidential nomination (Apr 92)
- 35 Federal Reserve Bank's interest rate reduction (Jan 1992)
- 35 The major job cuts announced by General Motors (Jan 1992)
- 35 The Standoff in Baghdad between the Iraqis and UN weapons inspectors (Oct 91)
- 35 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (July 1991)
- 35 Attempts to change the abortion laws (Dec 89)
- 35 Hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in the Mediterranean (July 86)
- 35 Explosion and fire on the U.S. Battleship Iowa (May 89)
- 34 Statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy (Feb 92)
- 34 Civil war in Iraq between Shiite Iraqis and forces loyal to Saddam Hussein (March 91)
- 34 Congressional and administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement (Nov 90)
- 34 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Oct 90)
- 34 Reports about flooding in Texas and other southwestern states (June 90)
- 34 The war between the Colombian government and the major drug traffickers (Sept 89)
- 33 The winter olympics (Feb 92)
- 33 The nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court of Clarence Thomas to replace retiring Justice Thurgood Marshall (July 1991)
- 33 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (May 91)
- 33 Crash of the Colombian airliner near Kennedy airport in New York (Feb 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 33 Congressional hearings about the Iran-Contra affair (Sept 87)
- 33 Guilty verdict in the trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Oct 89)
- 32 THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN (MAY 92)**
- 32 Mike Tyson's rape trial (Feb 92)
- 32 Criticisms of George Bush for being inconsistent in what he said about taxes and what he said about Persian Gulf policy (Nov 90)
- 31 Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as the Soviet Union came to an official end (Jan 1992)
- 31 Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (Dec 91)
- 31 President Bush's announcement of major nuclear arms reductions (Oct 91)
- 31 The closing of military bases around the country (July 1991)
- 31 Celebration of Earth Day (May 90)
- 31 The World Series (Oct 88)
- 31 Flight of East German refugees to West Germany (Oct 89)
- 31 Oliver North trial (May 89)
- 30 The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the Soviet Union (Dec 91)
- 30 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Aug 90)
- 30 Freeing of jailed black South African leader Nelson Mandela (March 90)
- 30 Banishment of Pete Rose from baseball for life (Sept 89)
- 30 The Democratic convention (Aug 88)
- 30 President Bush's call for higher taxes to help reduce the federal deficit (July 90)

- 29 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Sept 90)
- 29 Reports about the fires in Southern California (July 90)
- 29 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (April 90)
- 29 Suicide in Boston of Charles Stuart who murdered his pregnant wife and blamed it on a black man (Feb 90)
- 29 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Jan 90)
- 29 Political changes in East Germany and the flight of refugees to West Germany (Nov 89)
- 29 Attack and sexual assault on a female jogger in Central Park, New York, by a group of youths (May 89)
- 29 Failed coup attempt against Panamanian strongman Noriega (Oct 89)
- 28 SUPREME COURT DELIBERATIONS RE LEGALITY OF PA ABORTION RESTRICTIONS (MAY 92)**
- 28 The death of 87 people in a fire at a social club in the Bronx, New York (April 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in the Soviet Union (March 90)
- 28 Arrest of Washington's Mayor Barry on drug use charges (Feb 90)
- 28 The revolution in Romania (Jan 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Dec 89)
- 28 Problems at nuclear reactor plants (Oct 88)
- 28 The end of Gary Hart's candidacy and the Donna Rice allegations (Sept 87)
- 27 the William Kennedy Smith rape trial (Dec 91)
- 27 Deployment of U.S. marines to Liberia to protect the lives of Americans caught in the civil war (Aug 90)
- 27 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (May 90)

PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY

- 27 Acquittal of the owners of the McMartin Day Care Center in California who were charged with sexually abusing children (Feb 90)
- 27 The NFL playoffs (Jan 90)
- 27 The Republican convention (Aug 88)
- 26 President Bush's state of the union address (Feb 92)
- 26 Charges that the White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes and government cars for personal trips (July 1991)
- 26 Concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President (May 91)
- 26 Bush/Gorbachev summit meeting in Helsinki (Sept 90)
- 26 The death of Hank Gathers, a college basketball player, during a game (April 90)
- 26 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Feb 90)
- 26 Passage in Congress of a bill to bail out ailing savings and loan institutions (Aug 89)
- 25 Supreme court decision allowing laws that bar federally funded agencies from discussing abortion (July 1991)
- 25 Supreme Court's hearing of arguments in a Missouri abortion case (May 89)
- 24 Race for the Republican presidential nomination (Apr 92)
- 24 The breast implant controversy (Feb 92)
- 24 Charges that Reagan campaign officials made a deal with Iran to hold up release of the hostages until after the 1980 Presidential campaign (July 1991)
- 24 Charges that White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes for personal trips (May 91)
- 24 Supreme Court decision that found laws against flag burning unconstitutional and the attempt in Congress to amend the Constitution (July 90)
- 24 Nelson Mandela's visit to the U.S. (July 90)
- 24 Deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope (May 90)
- 24 Difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms (May 90)
- 24 The NCAA Basketball playoffs (April 90)
- 24 Supreme Court decision regarding a person's right to die (July 90)
- 23 Cyclone that devastated Bangladesh (May 91)
- 23 Attempt in Idaho to pass a bill that would severely restrict abortions (April 90)
- 23 Greyhound bus drivers' strike (April 90)
- 23 Discussion of the reunification of Germany (March 90)
- 23 The World Series (Nov 89)
- 22 Protests and demonstrations at abortion clinics in Wichita, Kansas (Oct 91)
- 22 Congressional hearings about U.S. Persian Gulf policy (Jan 91)
- 22 Reunification of Germany (Oct 90)
- 22 Washington Mayor Barry's trial (July 90)
- 22 The 54 year old Oregon woman suffering from Alzheimers who ended her life by using a suicide machine (July 90)
- 22 President Bush's visit to Colombia to attend a drug summit (March 90)
- 22 The Super Bowl (Feb 90)
- 22 Letter bombings of federal judges (Jan 90)
- 22 Discoveries made by the spacecraft Voyager 2 (Sept 89)
- 22 Trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Sept 89)
- 22 April hijacking of a Kuwaiti airplane by Shiite Moslems (May 88)
- 22 Cease fire in the war between Iran and Iraq (Aug 88)
- 22 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (May 88)
- 22 Charges that Pete Rose has bet on baseball games (July 89)
- 21 EXECUTION IN CA OF CONVICTED KILLER ROBERT ALTON HARRIS (MAY 92)**
- 21 Alleged rape of a young woman at the Kennedy family's Palm Beach estate (May 91)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 21 Controversy surrounding the way Roseanne Barr sang the National Anthem at a San Diego Padres baseball game (Aug 90)
- 21 Tensions between Moscow and the Baltic Republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania who wish to secede from the Soviet Union (June 90)
- 21 Discussions about German reunification (April 90)
- 21 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe (March 90)
- 21 Scandal involving HUD (Aug 89)
- 20 Mikhail Gorbachev's political problems in the Soviet Union (March 91)
- 20 Resignation of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the election of her successor (Jan 91)
- 20 The murder on a New York subway platform of a Utah man attempting to protect his family from attack by teenage muggers (Sept 90)
- 20 Earthquake in Iran (July 90)
- 20 Gorbachev/Bush summit (Dec 89)
- 20 Attempts by the U.S. government to depose General Noriega in Panama (May 88)
- 20 Post-season baseball playoffs (Oct 89)

- 19 The Republican primary in New Hampshire (Feb 92)
- 19 The Democratic primary in New Hampshire (Feb 92)
- 19 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Aug 90)
- 19 Elections in Nicaragua (March 90)
- 19 Coup attempt against the Filipino government (Dec 89)
- 19 Attempts in Congress to repeal the new catastrophic health insurance plan (Oct 89)
- 19 Incidents of racial violence in New York City and Virginia Beach (Sept 89)
- 19 Discussions of a U.S. Soviet arms agreement (Sept 87)
- 18 TENNIS STAR ARTHUR ASHE'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE HAS AIDS (MAY 92)**
- 18 News about the candidates and election campaigns in your state (Oct 90)
- 18 Special meetings between the Bush Administration and Congressional Leaders to find ways to reduce the federal deficit (June 90)
- 18 Continuing news about the Savings and Loan scandal (June 90)
- 18 Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates (May 90)
- 18 Senator Moynihan's proposal to cut social security taxes (Feb 90)
- 18 The stock market crash (May 88)
- 18 Conflict in the Middle East between Palestinians and the Israelis in the occupied territories (May 88)
- 17 President Bush's decision to lift the trade embargo on South Africa (July 1991)
- 17 Racial tension in New York City resulting from the Bensonhurst trial verdict and the black boycott of Korean grocers (June 90)
- 17 Discussions between the American and Japanese governments about trade issues (April 90)
- 17 A custody case involving a mother who went to jail and a little child taken to New Zealand by her grandparents (March 90)
- 17 Nomination of Robert Bork to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court (Sept 87)
- 16 David Duke's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 16 Nomination of David Souter to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace Justice William Brennan (Aug 90)
- 16 Washington DC Mayor Marion Barry's trial ending in a mistrial (Aug 90)
- 16 Financial troubles of Donald Trump (July 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 16 Dispute between the President and Congress over allowing Chinese students to remain in America (Feb 90)
- 15 Charges that Ark. Governor Clinton has had extra-marital affairs (Feb 92)
- 15 President Bush's decision to postpone loan guarantees to Israel (Oct 91)
- 15 Resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze (Jan 91)
- 15 Senate confirmation of Supreme Court Justice David Souter (Oct 90)
- 15 Controversy over the exclusion of blacks from membership in many country clubs at which national golf championship matches are played (Aug 90)
- 15 Education Summit held by Bush and the nation's Governors (Oct 89)
- 15 Ethics committee's investigation of Speaker of the House Jim Wright (May 89)
- 15 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 87)
- 15 Conflict of interest allegations about Attorney General Ed Meese (May 88)
- 15 Scandal involving HUD (July 89)
- 14 Resignation of head of national United Way on charges of financial wrong-doing (Apr 92)
- 14 President Bush's educational reform plan (May 91)
- 14 Political unrest and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union (May 91)
- 14 Renewed fighting between government and the rebels in El Salvador (Dec 89)
- 14 House approval of a cut in the capital gains tax (Oct 89)
- 14 Spy scandal involving a U.S. Diplomat in Vienna (Aug 89)
- 14 Coverage of Democratic and Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Sept 87)
- 14 Pending divorce between Mike Tyson and Robin Givens (Oct 88)
- 13 Referendum on ending white rule in South Africa (Apr 92)
- 13 CELEBRATION OF EARTH DAY (MAY 92)**
- 13 END OF UAW STRIKE AGAINST CATERPILLAR TRACTOR (MAY 92)**
- 13 The BCCI international banking scandal (Oct 91)
- 13 U.S. Department of Education prohibition of racially based college scholarships (Jan 91)
- 13 Worsening economic conditions in the Soviet Union (Sept 90)
- 13 Civil unrest and ethnic violence in Soviet Azerbaijan (Feb 90)
- 13 Resumption of fighting in Nicaragua between the Contras and government forces (Nov 89)
- 13 Elections in Virginia, New Jersey, New York City and other localities (Nov 89)
- 13 News about the Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Oct 88)
- 12 Nomination of Robert Gates to head the CIA (Oct 91)
- 12 News about the democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 91)
- 12 Russian President Boris Yeltsin's election victory and visit to the U.S. (July 1991)
- 12 The findings of the committee that investigated five senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (March 91)
- 12 Major League Baseball's decision to force George Steinbrenner to give up active control of the New York Yankees (Aug 90)
- 12 Pledge of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to end the armed struggle in South Africa (Aug 90)
- 12 Marital breakup of Donald and Ivana Trump (March 90)
- 12 Solidarity's role in governing Poland (July 89)
- 11 The controversy re Governor Clinton's joining ROTC to avoid the draft in 1969 (Feb 92)
- 11 The outbreak of civil war in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia (Jan 1992)
- 11 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Jan 1992)
- 11 Debate in Washington about a new civil rights bill (July 1991)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 11 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (July 1991)
- 11 The incident in Gaza in which a deranged Israeli killed seven Palestinians and the West bank riots that followed (June 90)
- 11 Legalization of banned black opposition groups in South Africa and the promise to free Nelson Mandela (Feb 90)
- 10 Mario Cuomo's decision not to seek the Democratic presidential nomination (Jan 1992)
- 10 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 10 Japanese purchase of Rockefeller center in New York City (Dec 89)
- 10 The spending and tax proposals made by Congressman Dan Rostenkowski to help reduce the budget deficit (April 90)
- 10 Academy Awards (April 90)

**9 DISCOVERY OF SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE OF THE BEGINNINGS OF THE UNIVERSE
(MAY 92)**

- 9 Purchase of entertainment giant, MCA by the Japanese consumer electronics company, Matsushita (Jan 91)
- 9 The investigation of five U.S. Senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (Jan 91)
- 9 Aids conference in San Francisco (July 90)
- 9 May day protests in Moscow (May 90)
- 9 Bankruptcy of Drexel Burnham Lambert Inc. (March 90)
- 9 Trial of Hotel owner Leona Helmsley for tax evasion (Sept 89)
- 9 Stories about the 20th anniversary of the Woodstock Music Festival (Aug 89)
- 8 The resignation of White House Chief of Staff John Sununu (Dec 91)
- 8 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Oct 91)
- 8 The release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan (May 91)
- 8 The murder in New York city of Jewish militant rabbi Meir Kahane (Nov 90)
- 7 Trial of allege N.Y. mafia boss John Gotti (Apr 92)
- 7 First reports from the 1990 U.S. census (Sept 90)
- 7 Pat Buchanan's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination (Dec 91)

6 STOCK MARKET CRASH IN JAPAN (MAY 92)

- 6 William Bennett's change of mind about heading the Republican National Committee (Jan 91)
- 6 Continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and in other republics of the Soviet Union (Nov 90)
- 6 United Nations Children's Summit held in New York (Oct 90)
- 6 Elections in Romania (June 90)
- 6 The visit to the United States of Vaclav Havel, the new president of Czechoslovakia (March 90)
- 6 Trip of high ranking officials to China (Jan 90)
- 6 Scandal involving the Japanese Prime Minister and other high ranking officials (May 89)
- 6 The scandal involving Congressman Barney Frank and a male prostitute (Oct 89)
- 5 The conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Dec 91)
- 4 Marital break-up of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson (Apr 92)
- 4 Dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto by Pakistan's President (Aug 90)
- 4 Civil war in Cambodia (May 90)
- 2 Tom Cruise's separation from his wife (April 90)

 Times Mirror
Center for
The People &
The Press

N E W S Release

EMBARGOED

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Washington, D.C. 20006
202 293-3126

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The Press & The Campaign: Part II

Times Mirror News Interest Index September 1992

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PRESS FAIR...INTRUSIVE... PARTIAL!

American voters fault the press for playing too intrusive a role in the presidential election campaign and believe that news organizations have been too *personally* critical of both George Bush and Bill Clinton. Yet most voters also feel the media has been fair in the way it has covered the President and his challenger. A six in ten majority gives the press an *excellent or good* overall grade for its coverage of the presidential election campaign.

The public's biggest complaint is that the press is too involved in the election process. A 54% majority believes the press is having *too much* of an influence on the outcome of the election, while just 4% think the press is playing too small a role, and 37% think that it is having the proper extent of influence.

A *Times Mirror* survey in the spring of this year found that members of the national press corps view their influence on the process quite differently than does the general public. Fifty-six percent of the media in late April felt that it was having about the *right amount* of influence on who became the Democratic presidential nominee. However, in a follow-up question, 67% of the press conceded that it did have a great deal (30%) or fair amount (37%) of influence on who wins the nomination.

Voter discontent with the level of influence the press is having on the outcome of the race is as extensive in 1992 as it was in 1988. Four years ago, when many Americans held the press accountable for the role it played in the demise of front-running Democrat Gary Hart's candidacy, 58% thought that the press was having *too great* an influence on the outcome of that contest.

Republicans, who are usually more critical of the press than other voters, find much more fault than Democrats or Independents with press coverage of *Campaign '92*. Two-thirds of GOP voters think the press is shaping the outcome of the election, compared to 41% of Democrats and 58% of people who think of themselves as political independents. As a result, the bottom line assessment of press performance in this campaign has a partisan skew. Republicans divide pretty much evenly between those who think the press has done an excellent or good job and those who give the media bad marks overall for its election coverage. In contrast, solid majorities of Democrats and Independents think the press has done an excellent or good job this year.

<i>Rate Press Coverage</i> <i>Overall</i>	<i>Party Affiliation</i>		
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Excellent	8	15	12
Good	44	49	42
Only Fair	30	25	28
Poor	14	8	12
Can't say	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100

Press Too Personally Critical of Bush and Clinton

In 1988, the public felt strongly that the press was too personally critical of then vice presidential candidate, Dan Quayle. In this election there is a significant level of public feeling that both presidential candidates have been the subject of too much personal criticism from the media. Forty-one percent of Times Mirror's nationwide sampling believed that the press has been too tough on George Bush, and 42% believe that the press has been too hard on Bill Clinton.

Four years ago somewhat smaller percentages of voters believed the press was being too tough on the presidential candidates. In an October '88 Times Mirror nationwide poll of voters, 33% thought the press was being too personally critical of George Bush and 37% felt that way about coverage of his opponent, Governor Michael Dukakis. At that time a large fifty-five percent majority of the public also thought that the press was being *unfair* in its coverage of vice presidential candidate Quayle.

Currently, Republicans are more apt to think that the press is being too personally critical of George Bush (58%), than Democrats are to think the media has been too tough on Bill Clinton (45%). Ironically, Republicans are almost as likely to believe the press has been too hard on Clinton (39%), as are members of his own party (45%).

Although many voters feel the media is too personally critical of the candidates, seven in ten see the press as *fair* in the way it has covered the candidacies of Bush and Clinton. Seventy-one percent think that George Bush's campaign has been covered fairly and 74% think that Bill Clinton's candidacy has received fair treatment from the media. Even a majority of Republicans (56%) think the press has been fair in the way the media has covered the President's re-election campaign.

Although majorities see press performance as fair to both campaigns, most people think that print and television reporters want to see Clinton, not Bush win the election. Fifty-two percent think most media people want Clinton to win in November, 17% think that the press wants Bush to win and 31% could not say.

In a follow-up question 49% of Times Mirror's sampling said they thought that press people often let their own political preferences influence the way they report the news. 35% said this sometimes happened and 14% thought it occurred seldom or never.

Voters who thought the press favored Clinton were as likely to think the media lets its bias show, as were those who favor Bush. In fact, voters who said they did not know who the press wanted to win the presidential election, also said they thought the press lets its preferences affect its reporting.

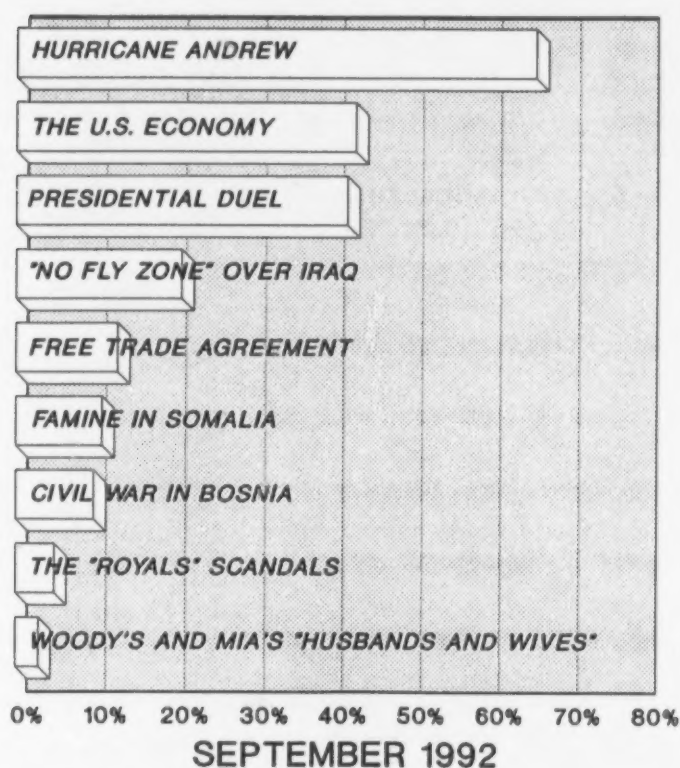
**How Often Press
Lets Preferences
Influence Reporting:**

Candidate Press Thought to Favor

<u>Bush</u>	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Neither/DK</u>
%	%	%
Often	54	39
Sometimes	36	35
Seldom	9	17
Never	1	4
Dk	*	5
<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

Times Mirror News Interest Index

Public Interest and Awareness of the News



**Times Mirror Center
for The People & The Press**

Americans Focused on Hurricane Andrew: **The Economy and the Campaign Tie for Second**

Americans found Hurricane Andrew and its aftermath to be far more newsworthy than reports about the U.S. economy or the presidential campaign, according to the latest *Times Mirror News Interest Index*.

And despite the enormous amount of news coverage and late night comedy monologues concerning the Woody Allen-Mia Farrow breakup and the troubles of Britain's royal family, surprisingly few Americans said they were paying close attention to those stories.

Sixty-six percent of Times Mirror's respondents said they were following the Hurricane Andrew story **"very closely,"** compared to 43% who said the same about reports on the condition of the U.S. economy, and the 42% who closely followed the presidential election campaign.

Other stories and the percentage of people following them **"very closely"** are: the establishment of a "no fly zone" in southern Iraq (21%), the North American free trade treaty (13%), the civil war and famine in Somalia (11%), the civil war in Bosnia (10%), scandals in the British Royal Family (5%), and the Woody Allen-Mia Farrow breakup (3%).

The number of people following the Hurricane Andrew story very closely is comparable to the data for other natural disasters. The San Francisco earthquake in November 1989 was very closely followed by 73%, while Hurricane Hugo in October 1989 received a measure of 60%. Older Americans followed the Hurricane Andrew story more closely than younger people (71% of those age 50+ followed the story very closely vs. 60% for people under 30).

Other significant data finds:

*The Woody Allen-Mia Farrow breakup (3% of respondents followed "very closely") received considerably less attention than the breakup of Donald and Ivana Trump (12% in March 1990), the Leona Helmsley trial for tax evasion (9% in September 1989), the release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan (8% in May 1991), and the breakup of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson (4% in April 1992);

*The presidential election is being followed very closely by virtually the same number of people as followed the presidential campaign (42% vs. 43%) in August of 1988;

*Despite the heavy coverage of the civil war in Bosnia, only 20% of the respondents could correctly identify the Serbs as the ethnic group that has conquered much of the region;

*African Americans followed the civil war and famine in Somalia somewhat more closely than white Americans (16% vs. 10%);

***Men followed the North American free trade treaty more closely than women (18% vs. 8%);**

***As news coverage of major events intensifies, increased public approval of CNN coverage is marked; 43% cite CNN as the network doing the best job covering the news vs. 36% at the end of March of 1992.**

PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	<i>Hurricane Andrew</i>	<i>Civil War in Bosnia</i>	<i>U.S. and its Allies Establishing a No Fly Zone Over the Skies of Southern Iraq</i>	<i>Reports About the Condition of the U.S Economy</i>	<i>Civil War and Famine in Somalia</i>	<i>N</i>
Total	66	10	21	43	11	(1508)
Sex						
Male	63	11	24	46	10	(754)
Female	68	9	18	41	12	(754)
Race						
White	65	9	22	43	10	(1271)
*Hispanic	69	23	19	41	16	(87)
Black	72	10	16	47	16	(132)
Age						
Under 30	60	6	19	36	7	(341)
30-49	64	11	18	41	12	(649)
50+	71	11	26	51	13	(502)
Education						
College graduate	68	19	21	52	15	(472)
Other college	66	10	21	46	10	(390)
High school grad.	67	7	23	42	11	(480)
Less than h.s. grad.	62	4	19	32	9	(160)
Region						
East	64	12	18	44	16	(293)
Midwest	63	8	21	42	7	(399)
South	73	10	23	43	9	(554)
West	58	10	21	45	14	(262)
Party ID						
Republican	65	9	21	42	8	(419)
Democrat	69	10	23	48	12	(491)
Independent	65	10	19	41	12	(541)

Question: *Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.*

*The designation, hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

CONTINUED...

	Woody Allen/Mia Farrow Breakup	Presiden- tial Election Campaign	Debate and Discussion About the Free Trade Agreement Between U.S., Mexico & Canada	Scandals in the British Royal Family
Total	3	42	13	5
Sex				
Male	3	44	18	2
Female	4	41	8	8
Race				
White	3	42	13	5
*Hispanic	2	42	14	6
Black	4	39	12	5
Age				
Under 30	2	40	8	4
30-49	4	39	12	4
50 +	3	47	17	7
Education				
College graduate	5	52	18	4
Other college	3	46	12	4
High school grad.	4	38	12	6
Less than h.s. grad.	*	33	10	6
Region				
East	3	41	11	7
Midwest	3	43	15	3
South	3	41	12	6
West	4	45	14	5
Party ID				
Republican	3	46	12	7
Democrat	4	48	14	5
Independent	3	36	12	5

Question: *Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.*

*The designation, hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted among a nationwide sample of 1,508 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period September 10-13, 1992. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

TIMES MIRROR CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS
NEWS INTEREST INDEX
September 1992
N=1,508

INTRODUCTION: Hello, we are conducting a telephone opinion survey for leading newspapers and tv stations around the country. I'd like to ask a few questions of the youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home (IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the oldest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home?)

MY FIRST QUESTION IS...

Q.1 Taken all together, how would you say things are these days--would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy or not too happy?

17	Very happy
48	Pretty happy
34	Not too happy
<u>1</u> 100	Can't say

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Q.2 What do you think is the most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world in the past 4 weeks? (DO NOT READ)

6 OTHER (SPECIFY)

1 DON'T KNOW

* REFUSED

18 NONE

International Stories

The civil war in Bosnia

2

6

U.S. and its allies establishing a no fly zone over the skies of southern Iraq

2

The civil war and famine in Somalia

2

Scandals in the British Royal family involving the Duchess of York - Fergie and Princess Diana

0

Domestic Stories

Hurricane Andrew

53

68

Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy

3

Woody Allen and Mia Farrow's family breakup

0

The Presidential election campaign

12

Debate and discussion about the free trade agreement between the U.S., Mexico and Canada

*

Q.3 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (READ AND ROTATE LIST)

		<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
a.	Hurricane Andrew	66	27	4	3	*=100
b.	The civil war in Bosnia	10	27	31	31	1=100
c.	U.S. and its allies establishing a no fly zone over the skies of southern Iraq	21	37	26	15	1=100
d.	Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	43	37	13	6	1=100
	May, 1992	39	39	15	6	1=100
	Mar, 1992	47	38	11	4	*=100
	Feb, 1992	47	37	10	6	*=100
	Jan, 1992	44	40	11	5	*=100
	Oct, 1991	36	38	16	9	1=100
e.	The civil war and famine in Somalia	11	24	31	33	1=100
f.	Woody Allen and Mia Farrow's family breakup	3	14	32	50	1=100
g.	The Presidential election campaign ¹	42	37	13	8	*=100
	Aug, 1992	36	51	11	2	0=100
	May, 1992	35	43	15	7	*=100
	Aug, 1988	43	44	11	2	*=100
h.	Debate and discussion about the free trade agreement between the U.S., Mexico and Canada	13	27	29	30	1=100
i.	Scandals in the British Royal family involving the Duchess of York - Fergie and Princess Diana	5	14	30	50	1=100

*Based on registered voters.

¹ The trend for this statement is based on registered voters.

Q.4 Which one of the stories I just mentioned, have you followed most closely?
(DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)

	Story Followed Most Closely
a. Hurricane Andrew	51
b. The civil war in Bosnia	3
c. U.S. and its allies establishing a no fly zone over the skies of southern Iraq	4
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	10
e. The civil war and famine in Somalia	2
f. Woody Allen and Mia Farrow's family breakup	1
g. The Presidential election campaign	23
h. Debate and discussion about the free trade agreement between the U.S., Mexico and Canada	1
i. Scandals in the British Royal family involving the Duchess of York - Fergie and Princess Diana	2
Can't say	<u>3</u>
	100

IF RESPONDENT SAID '99' CAN'T SAY IN Q.4, SKIP TO Q.6

Q.5 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.4); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		Hurricane Andrew	Reports on Condition of U.S. Economy	Presidential Election Campaign
24	Excellent	33	8	13
43	Good	46	40	39
22	Only Fair	16	27	30
10	Poor	4	22	17
<u>1</u> 100 (1446)	Don't know	<u>1</u> 100 (747)	<u>3</u> 100 (160)	<u>1</u> 100 (354)

ASK ALL:

Q.6 In your opinion, which TV network has been doing the best job of covering the news lately - ABC, CBS, NBC or CNN?

		May 1992	Mar 1992	Feb 1992	Oct 1991	July 1991	May 1991	Mar ² 1991
15	ABC	20	20	19	17	18	18	12
13	CBS	14	17	18	14	14	13	8
12	NBC	14	14	14	13	13	14	10
43	CNN	40	36	37	42	41	41	58
<u>17</u> 100	Don't know	<u>12</u> 100	<u>13</u> 100	<u>12</u> 100	<u>14</u> 100	<u>14</u> 100	<u>14</u> 100	<u>12</u> 100

² In March, 1991 respondents were asked which network was doing the best job of covering the "crisis in the Gulf".

(NOTE: SKIP Q.7 IF FOLLOWED PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN MOST CLOSELY IN Q4. MOVE ANSWER FROM Q.5 INTO Q.7)

THINKING ABOUT THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN SPECIFICALLY...

Q.7 All in all, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the presidential campaign so far; excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		May 1992	Mar 1992	Feb 1992
12	Excellent	10	12	11
45	Good	44	51	45
27	Only Fair	33	28	32
11	Poor	10	6	7
<u>5</u> 100	Don't know	<u>3</u> 100	<u>3</u> 100	<u>5</u> 100

Q.8 How have you been getting most of your news about the Presidential election campaign? From television, from newspapers, from radio or from magazines? (ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS)

IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' TELEVISION IN Q.8 ASK:

Q.9 Do you get most of your news about the presidential campaign from network tv news, from local tv news, or from CNN? (ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS)

		June 1992	May 1992	Mar 1992	Feb 1992
83	Television	84	86	83	80
37	Network	50	46	41	40
36	Local	38	40	32	37
33	CNN	34	34	30	29
4	(DO NOT READ) Other	2	4	2	2
<u>2</u>	Can't say	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
112*		125*	125*	107*	109*
49	Newspapers	55	51	48	49
13	Radio	18	17	14	18
5	Magazines	7	6	4	4
4	Other	4	3	3	3
<u>1</u>	Can't say	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>
155**		168**	164**	152**	155**

*Total exceeds the % who mentioned tv due to multiple responses

**Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses

NOW I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT SOME THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN IN THE NEWS - NOT EVERYONE WILL HAVE HEARD ABOUT THEM

Q.10 Do you happen to know which political party has a majority in the U.S. Senate? (DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS)

		June 1992	May 1992
10	Republican	17	17
57	Democrat	52	55
<u>33</u> 100	Can't say	<u>31</u> 100	<u>28</u> 100

Q.11 Do you happen to know which political party has a majority in the U.S. House of Representatives? (DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS)

		June 1992	May 1992	
9	Republican	12	12	
46	Democrat	44	49	
<u>45</u> 100	Can't say	<u>44</u> 100	<u>39</u> 100	
NET:	39%	35%	38%	(Democratic House and Senate)

Q.12 Do you happen to know the name of the ethnic group that has conquered much of Bosnia and has surrounded the city of Sarajevo?

20	Serbs
2	Croats
3	Other
<u>75</u> 100	No/Don't know

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT

Q.32a This month the Census Department issued a report about poverty in America. To the best of your recollection, did it show that poverty was increasing or decreasing or didn't you happen to hear about the report?

60	Increasing
3	Decreasing
34	Didn't hear about the report
<u>3</u>	Don't know
100	
(1508)	

Q.33 So far, do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage to the 1992 presidential campaign, too little coverage to the campaign, or the right amount of coverage?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS

		Feb <u>1992</u>	Oct ³ <u>1988</u>
22	Too much	20	21
11	Too little	15	16
62	Right amount	61	58
<u>5</u>	Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100
(1175)		(984)	(1501)

Q.34 How much influence do you think news organizations have on which candidate becomes the President: too much, too little or about the right amount? (READ CATEGORIES 1-3)

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS

		Feb <u>1992</u>	Oct <u>1988</u>
54	Too much	59	58
4	Too little	6	3
37	About the right amount	32	36
<u>5</u>	Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100
(1175)		(984)	(2006)

³ This question is based on total sample.

FORM 1

Q.35 Would you say the press has been fair or unfair in the way it has covered George Bush's election campaign?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS

		March
		<u>1992</u>
71	Fair	<u>79</u>
22	Unfair	13
<u>7</u>	Don't know	<u>8</u>
<u>100</u>		<u>100</u>
(575)		(924)

FORM 1

Q.36 Would you say the press has been fair or unfair in the way it has covered Bill Clinton's election campaign?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS

		March
		<u>1992</u>
74	Fair	<u>70</u>
21	Unfair	22
<u>5</u>	Don't know	<u>8</u>
<u>100</u>		<u>100</u>
(575)		(924)

FORM 2

Q.37 Who do you think most newspapers reporters and tv journalists want to see win the presidential election - George Bush or Bill Clinton?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS

17	Bush
52	Clinton
5	Neither
<u>26</u>	Don't know
<u>100</u>	
(600)	

FORM 2

Q.38 How often do you think members of the news media let their own political preferences influence the way they report the news? (READ CATEGORIES 1-4)

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS

49 Often
35 Sometimes
12 Seldom
2 Never
2 Can't say
100
(600)

ASK ALL:

Q.39 In the presidential campaign so far, have news organizations been too personally critical of George Bush, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS

41	Yes	Oct 1988 33
53	No	62
<u>6</u>	Can't say	<u>5</u>
100		100
(1175)		(2006)

Q.40 In the presidential campaign so far, have news organizations been too personally critical of Bill Clinton, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS

42	Yes	Oct ⁴ 1988 37
52	No	58
<u>6</u>	Can't say	<u>5</u>
100		100
(1175)		(2006)

⁴ In 1988 the question was asked, "In the presidential campaign so far, do you think news organizations have been too personally critical of Michael Dukakis, or not?"

TIMES MIRROR DATABASE

PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES

(1986 - 1992)

PERCENT FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY

- 80 Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (July 86)
- 73 Destruction caused by the San Francisco earthquake (Nov 89)
- 70 Verdict in Rodney King case and following riots and disturbances (May 92)
- 69 Little girl in Texas who was rescued after falling into a well (Oct 87)
- 67 War's end and the homecoming of U.S. forces from the Gulf (March 91)
- 66 HURRICANE ANDREW (SEPT 92)**
- 66 Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia (Aug 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Oct 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Sept 90)
- 62 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Nov 90)
- 62 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Oct 90)
- 60 Invasion of Panama (Jan 90)
- 60 Destruction caused by Hurricane Hugo (Oct 89)
- 59 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Jan 91)
- 58 U.S. air strikes against Libya (July 86)
- 57 The plight of the American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq (Sept 90)
- 57 Recent increase in the price of gasoline (Aug 90)
- 56 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Sept 90)
- 53 Crash of a United Airlines DC-10 in Sioux City, Iowa (Aug 89)
- 52 Alaska Oil Spill (May 89)
- 51 The release of American hostages and other westerners from Iraq and Kuwait (Jan 91)
- 51 Supreme Court decision of flag burning (July 89)
- 50 Opening of the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany (Nov 89)
- 50 Flight of the space shuttle (Oct 88)
- 49 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Nov 90)
- 49 Murder of Marine Lt. Col. Higgins in Lebanon, and negotiations to free the other hostages in the Mideast (Aug 89)
- 49 Drought and its effects on American farmers (Aug 88)
- 48 TWA hostage crisis that took place last summer in Beirut, Lebanon (July 86)
- 47 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Apr 92)
- 47 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Feb 92)
- 47 Breakup of the Soviet Union following the failed coup to depose of Mikhail Gorbachev (Oct 91)
- 47 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Oct 90)
- 47 Political upheaval in China (July 89)
- 47 Supreme Court decision on abortion (July 89)
- 46 Videotaped beating by Los Angeles police of a suspect they apprehended in an auto chase (March 91)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 46 Nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union (July 86)
- 46 Freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast (May 90)
- 44 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 1992)
- 44 The release of the last American hostages being held in Lebanon (Dec 91)
- 43 REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY (SEPT 92)**
- 43 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Dec 91)
- 43 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Oct 88)
- 42 THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN (SEPT 92)**
- 42 Hot weather this summer and the greenhouse effect (Aug 88)
- 42 Downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a U.S. Navy ship (Aug 88)
- 41 News regarding harassment charges raised against supreme court nominee Clarence Thomas (Oct 91)
- 40 Bush administration's plan to deal with this country's drug problem (Sept 89)
- 40 The stock market crash (Oct 87)
- 39 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (May 92)
- 39 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Nov 90)
- 39 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Aug 88)
- 38 President Bush's heart problem (May 91)
- 38 News about the candidates and elections in your state (Nov 90)
- 38 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the U.S. for a Summit meeting (June 90)
- 38 Drug use and efforts to combat it (Jan 90)
- 38 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Sept 87)
- 37 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Oct 87)
- 37 Stories about Dan Quayle, the Republican Vice-Presidential candidate (Aug 88)
- 37 Sentencing of Oliver North (July 89)
- 36 Congressional check bouncing scandal (Apr 92)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Oct 91)
- 36 The situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq and allied attempts to help them (May 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (March 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 91)
- 36 The murder of five people by a serial killer around the University of Florida campus in Gainesville (Sept 90)
- 35 Race for the Democratic presidential nomination (Apr 92)
- 35 Federal Reserve Bank's interest rate reduction (Jan 1992)
- 35 The major job cuts announced by General Motors (Jan 1992)
- 35 The Standoff in Baghdad between the Iraqis and UN weapons inspectors (Oct 91)
- 35 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (July 1991)
- 35 Attempts to change the abortion laws (Dec 89)
- 35 Hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in the Mediterranean (July 86)
- 35 Explosion and fire on the U.S. Battleship Iowa (May 89)
- 34 Statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy (Feb 92)
- 34 Civil war in Iraq between Shiite Iraqis and forces loyal to Saddam Hussein (March 91)
- 34 Congressional and administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement (Nov 90)
- 34 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Oct 90)
- 34 Reports about flooding in Texas and other southwestern states (June 90)
- 34 The war between the Colombian government and the major drug traffickers (Sept 89)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 33 The winter olympics (Feb 92)
- 33 The nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court of Clarence Thomas to replace retiring Justice Thurgood Marshall (July 1991)
- 33 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (May 91)
- 33 Crash of the Colombian airliner near Kennedy airport in New York (Feb 90)
- 33 Congressional hearings about the Iran-Contra affair (Sept 87)
- 33 Guilty verdict in the trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Oct 89)
- 32 The Presidential election campaign (May 92)
- 32 Mike Tyson's rape trial (Feb 92)
- 32 Criticisms of George Bush for being inconsistent in what he said about taxes and what he said about Persian Gulf policy (Nov 90)
- 31 Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as the Soviet Union came to an official end (Jan 1992)
- 31 Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (Dec 91)
- 31 President Bush's announcement of major nuclear arms reductions (Oct 91)
- 31 The closing of military bases around the country (July 1991)
- 31 Celebration of Earth Day (May 90)
- 31 The World Series (Oct 88)
- 31 Flight of East German refugees to West Germany (Oct 89)
- 31 Oliver North trial (May 89)
- 30 The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the Soviet Union (Dec 91)
- 30 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Aug 90)
- 30 Freeing of jailed black South African leader Nelson Mandela (March 90)
- 30 Banishment of Pete Rose from baseball for life (Sept 89)
- 30 The Democratic convention (Aug 88)
- 30 President Bush's call for higher taxes to help reduce the federal deficit (July 90)

- 29 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Sept 90)
- 29 Reports about the fires in Southern California (July 90)
- 29 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (April 90)
- 29 Suicide in Boston of Charles Stuart who murdered his pregnant wife and blamed it on a black man (Feb 90)
- 29 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Jan 90)
- 29 Political changes in East Germany and the flight of refugees to West Germany (Nov 89)
- 29 Attack and sexual assault on a female jogger in Central Park, New York, by a group of youths (May 89)
- 29 Failed coup attempt against Panamanian strongman Noriega (Oct 89)
- 28 Supreme Court deliberations re legality of PA abortion restrictions (May 92)
- 28 The death of 87 people in a fire at a social club in the Bronx, New York (April 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in the Soviet Union (March 90)
- 28 Arrest of Washington's Mayor Barry on drug use charges (Feb 90)
- 28 The revolution in Romania (Jan 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Dec 89)
- 28 Problems at nuclear reactor plants (Oct 88)
- 28 The end of Gary Hart's candidacy and the Donna Rice allegations (Sept 87)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 27 William Kennedy Smith rape trial (Dec 91)
- 27 Deployment of U.S. marines to Liberia to protect the lives of Americans caught in the civil war (Aug 90)
- 27 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (May 90)
- 27 Acquittal of the owners of the McMartin Day Care Center in California who were charged with sexually abusing children (Feb 90)
- 27 The NFL playoffs (Jan 90)
- 27 The Republican convention (Aug 88)
- 26 President Bush's state of the union address (Feb 92)
- 26 Charges that the White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes and government cars for personal trips (July 1991)
- 26 Concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President (May 91)
- 26 Bush/Gorbachev summit meeting in Helsinki (Sept 90)
- 26 The death of Hank Gathers, a college basketball player, during a game (April 90)
- 26 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Feb 90)
- 26 Passage in Congress of a bill to bail out ailing savings and loan institutions (Aug 89)
- 25 Supreme court decision allowing laws that bar federally funded agencies from discussing abortion (July 1991)
- 25 Supreme Court's hearing of arguments in a Missouri abortion case (May 89)
- 24 Race for the Republican presidential nomination (Apr 92)
- 24 The breast implant controversy (Feb 92)
- 24 Charges that Reagan campaign officials made a deal with Iran to hold up release of the hostages until after the 1980 Presidential campaign (July 1991)
- 24 Charges that White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes for personal trips (May 91)
- 24 Supreme Court decision that found laws against flag burning unconstitutional and the attempt in Congress to amend the Constitution (July 90)
- 24 Nelson Mandela's visit to the U.S. (July 90)
- 24 Deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope (May 90)
- 24 Difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms (May 90)
- 24 The NCAA Basketball playoffs (April 90)
- 24 Supreme Court decision regarding a person's right to die (July 90)
- 23 Cyclone that devastated Bangladesh (May 91)
- 23 Attempt in Idaho to pass a bill that would severely restrict abortions (April 90)
- 23 Greyhound bus drivers' strike (April 90)
- 23 Discussion of the reunification of Germany (March 90)
- 23 The World Series (Nov 89)
- 22 Protests and demonstrations at abortion clinics in Wichita, Kansas (Oct 91)
- 22 Congressional hearings about U.S. Persian Gulf policy (Jan 91)
- 22 Reunification of Germany (Oct 90)
- 22 Washington Mayor Barry's trial (July 90)
- 22 The 54 year old Oregon woman suffering from Alzheimers who ended her life by using a suicide machine (July 90)
- 22 President Bush's visit to Colombia to attend a drug summit (March 90)
- 22 The Super Bowl (Feb 90)
- 22 Letter bombings of federal judges (Jan 90)
- 22 Discoveries made by the spacecraft Voyager 2 (Sept 89)
- 22 Trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Sept 89)
- 22 April hijacking of a Kuwaiti airplane by Shiite Moslems (May 88)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 22 Cease fire in the war between Iran and Iraq (Aug 88)
- 22 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (May 88)
- 22 Charges that Pete Rose has bet on baseball games (July 89)
- 21 ***U.S. AND ITS ALLIES ESTABLISHING A NO FLY ZONE OVER THE SKIES OF
SOUTHERN IRAQ (SEPT 92)***
- 21 Execution in CA of convicted killer Robert Alton Harris (May 92)
- 21 Alleged rape of a young woman at the Kennedy family's Palm Beach estate (May 91)
- 21 Controversy surrounding the way Roseanne Barr sang the National Anthem at a San Diego
Padres baseball game (Aug 90)
- 21 Tensions between Moscow and the Baltic Republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania who
wish to secede from the Soviet Union (June 90)
- 21 Discussions about German reunification (April 90)
- 21 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany and other countries
of Eastern and Central Europe (March 90)
- 21 Scandal involving HUD (Aug 89)
- 20 Mikhail Gorbachev's political problems in the Soviet Union (March 91)
- 20 Resignation of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the election of
her successor (Jan 91)
- 20 The murder on a New York subway platform of a Utah man attempting to protect his
family from attack by teenage muggers (Sept 90)
- 20 Earthquake in Iran (July 90)
- 20 Gorbachev/Bush summit (Dec 89)
- 20 Attempts by the U.S. government to depose General Noriega in Panama (May 88)
- 20 Post-season baseball playoffs (Oct 89)
- 19 The Republican primary in New Hampshire (Feb 92)
- 19 The Democratic primary in New Hampshire (Feb 92)
- 19 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget
deficit (Aug 90)
- 19 Elections in Nicaragua (March 90)
- 19 Coup attempt against the Filipino government (Dec 89)
- 19 Attempts in Congress to repeal the new catastrophic health insurance plan (Oct 89)
- 19 Incidents of racial violence in New York City and Virginia Beach (Sept 89)
- 19 Discussions of a U.S. Soviet arms agreement (Sept 87)
- 18 Tennis star Arthur Ashe's announcement that he has AIDS (May 92)
- 18 News about the candidates and election campaigns in your state (Oct 90)
- 18 Special meetings between the Bush Administration and Congressional Leaders to find ways
to reduce the federal deficit (June 90)
- 18 Continuing news about the Savings and Loan scandal (June 90)
- 18 Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates (May 90)
- 18 Senator Moynihan's proposal to cut social security taxes (Feb 90)
- 18 The stock market crash (May 88)
- 18 Conflict in the Middle East between Palestinians and the Israelis in the occupied
territories (May 88)
- 17 President Bush's decision to lift the trade embargo on South Africa (July 1991)
- 17 Racial tension in New York City resulting from the Bensonhurst trial verdict and the black
boycott of Korean grocers (June 90)
- 17 Discussions between the American and Japanese governments about trade issues (April 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 17 A custody case involving a mother who went to jail and a little child taken to New Zealand by her grandparents (March 90)
- 17 Nomination of Robert Bork to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court (Sept 87)
- 16 David Duke's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 16 Nomination of David Souter to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace Justice William Brennan (Aug 90)
- 16 Washington DC Mayor Marion Barry's trial ending in a mistrial (Aug 90)
- 16 Financial troubles of Donald Trump (July 90)
- 16 Dispute between the President and Congress over allowing Chinese students to remain in America (Feb 90)
- 15 Charges that Ark. Governor Clinton has had extra-marital affairs (Feb 92)
- 15 President Bush's decision to postpone loan guarantees to Israel (Oct 91)
- 15 Resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze (Jan 91)
- 15 Senate confirmation of Supreme Court Justice David Souter (Oct 90)
- 15 Controversy over the exclusion of blacks from membership in many country clubs at which national golf championship matches are played (Aug 90)
- 15 Education Summit held by Bush and the nation's Governors (Oct 89)
- 15 Ethics committee's investigation of Speaker of the House Jim Wright (May 89)
- 15 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 87)
- 15 Conflict of interest allegations about Attorney General Ed Meese (May 88)
- 15 Scandal involving HUD (July 89)
- 14 Resignation of head of national United Way on charges of financial wrong-doing (Apr 92)
- 14 President Bush's educational reform plan (May 91)
- 14 Political unrest and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union (May 91)
- 14 Renewed fighting between government and the rebels in El Salvador (Dec 89)
- 14 House approval of a cut in the capital gains tax (Oct 89)
- 14 Spy scandal involving a U.S. Diplomat in Vienna (Aug 89)
- 14 Coverage of Democratic and Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Sept 87)
- 14 Pending divorce between Mike Tyson and Robin Givens (Oct 88)
- 13 DEBATE AND DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE U.S., MEXICO AND CANADA (SEPT 92)**
- 13 Referendum on ending white rule in South Africa (Apr 92)
- 13 Celebration of Earth Day (May 92)
- 13 End of UAW strike against Caterpillar Tractor (May 92)
- 13 The BCCI international banking scandal (Oct 91)
- 13 U.S. Department of Education prohibition of racially based college scholarships (Jan 91)
- 13 Worsening economic conditions in the Soviet Union (Sept 90)
- 13 Civil unrest and ethnic violence in Soviet Azerbaijan (Feb 90)
- 13 Resumption of fighting in Nicaragua between the Contras and government forces (Nov 89)
- 13 Elections in Virginia, New Jersey, New York City and other localities (Nov 89)
- 13 News about the Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Oct 88)
- 12 Nomination of Robert Gates to head the CIA (Oct 91)
- 12 News about the democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 91)
- 12 Russian President Boris Yeltsin's election victory and visit to the U.S. (July 1991)
- 12 The findings of the committee that investigated five senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (March 91)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY**

- 12 Major League Baseball's decision to force George Steinbrenner to give up active control of the New York Yankees (Aug 90)
- 12 Pledge of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to end the armed struggle in South Africa (Aug 90)
- 12 Marital breakup of Donald and Ivana Trump (March 90)
- 12 Solidarity's role in governing Poland (July 89)
- 11 CIVIL WAR AND FAMINE IN SOMALIA (SEPT 92)**
- 11 The controversy re Governor Clinton's joining ROTC to avoid the draft in 1969 (Feb 92)
- 11 The outbreak of civil war in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia (Jan 1992)
- 11 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Jan 1992)
- 11 Debate in Washington about a new civil rights bill (July 1991)
- 11 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (July 1991)
- 11 The incident in Gaza in which a deranged Israeli killed seven Palestinians and the West bank riots that followed (June 90)
- 11 Legalization of banned black opposition groups in South Africa and the promise to free Nelson Mandela (Feb 90)
- 10 CIVIL WAR IN BOSNIA (SEPT 92)**
- 10 Mario Cuomo's decision not to seek the Democratic presidential nomination (Jan 1992)
- 10 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 10 Japanese purchase of Rockefeller center in New York City (Dec 89)
- 10 The spending and tax proposals made by Congressman Dan Rostenkowski to help reduce the budget deficit (April 90)
- 10 Academy Awards (April 90)

- 9 Discovery of scientific evidence of the beginnings of the universe (May 92)
- 9 Purchase of entertainment giant, MCA by the Japanese consumer electronics company, Matsushita (Jan 91)
- 9 The investigation of five U.S. Senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (Jan 91)
- 9 Aids conference in San Francisco (July 90)
- 9 May day protests in Moscow (May 90)
- 9 Bankruptcy of Drexel Burnham Lambert Inc. (March 90)
- 9 Trial of Hotel owner Leona Helmsley for tax evasion (Sept 89)
- 9 Stories about the 20th anniversary of the Woodstock Music Festival (Aug 89)
- 8 The resignation of White House Chief of Staff John Sununu (Dec 91)
- 8 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Oct 91)
- 8 The release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan (May 91)
- 8 The murder in New York city of Jewish militant rabbi Meir Kahane (Nov 90)
- 7 Trial of allege N.Y. mafia boss John Gotti (Apr 92)
- 7 First reports from the 1990 U.S. census (Sept 90)
- 7 Pat Buchanan's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination (Dec 91)

PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY

- 6 Stock market crash in Japan (May 92)
- 6 William Bennett's change of mind about heading the Republican National Committee (Jan 91)
- 6 Continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and in other republics of the Soviet Union (Nov 90)
- 6 United Nations Children's Summit held in New York (Oct 90)
- 6 Elections in Romania (June 90)
- 6 The visit to the United States of Vaclav Havel, the new president of
Czechoslovakia (March 90)
- 6 Trip of high ranking officials to China (Jan 90)
- 6 Scandal involving the Japanese Prime Minister and other high ranking officials (May 89)
- 6 The scandal involving Congressman Barney Frank and a male prostitute (Oct 89)
- 5 ***SCANDALS IN THE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY INVOLVING THE DUCHESS OF YORK -
FERGIE AND PRINCESS DIANA (SEPT 92)***
- 5 The conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Dec 91)
- 4 Marital break-up of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson (Apr 92)
- 4 Dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto by Pakistan's President (Aug 90)
- 4 Civil war in Cambodia (May 90)
- 3 ***WOODY ALLEN AND MIA FARROW'S FAMILY BREAKUP (SEPT 92)***
- 2 Tom Cruise's separation from his wife (April 90)